

**ZONING AND PLATTING COMMISSION
SITE PLAN
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REVIEW SHEET**

CASE NUMBER: SPC-2017-0051C **COMMISSION DATE:** December 5, 2017

PROJECT NAME: Onion Creek Metro Park

ADDRESS: 8652 Nuckols Crossing Road

APPLICANT: COA – Parks and Recreation Dept. (Charles Mabry)
COA - Public Works Dept. (Robin Camp)
919 W. 28 ½ Street
Austin, TX 78705

AGENT: MWM Design Group (Shari Pape)
305 Huntland Drive Suite 200
Austin, TX 78752

CASE MANAGER: Nikki Hoelter (512) 974-2863
Nikki.hoelter@austintexas.gov

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT: Delia Garza - 2

AREA: 555 acres

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit site plan for the development of a metropolitan park in the southeast portion of the City of Austin. The improvements proposed include a decomposed granite trail, parking, sidewalks, two 600 square foot pavilions, open play field, trail head kiosk, drainage and water quality improvements, utilities and other associated improvements related to park construction. The gross site area is 555 acres, the project will be phased and only 30 acres will be developed at the present time.

Planning Commission approval is required because the site is zoned P, public and over one acre, LDC Section 25-2-625(D)(2), which states, "for a site of one acre or more, the site development regulations are established by the approval of a conditional use site plan."

EXISTING ZONING: P, Public

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit because the P, public zoning districts allows civic land uses, as this use is a parks and recreation service (general) land use, which would fall under the category of civic land uses. The approval of the conditional use permit will establish the site development regulations for the park.

The park is currently wooded and undeveloped green space that's part of the Onion Creek Metropolitan Park master plan. A portion of the site is within the flood plain, but is not within the limits of construction. The park will be a phased project, beginning with the 30 acres of limits of construction shown with this plan. The project will establish park entrances, trail head entrances and interior trails, and pedestrian connections to Nuckols Crossing Road which is adjacent to the Goodnight Ranch PUD mixed use development, an elementary school and a single family neighborhood. According to the master plan,

phase 1 will be considered community event space. The park intends to serve the surrounding southeast Austin area and eventually be a destination park.

The master plan was approved by the Parks and Recreation Board on April 28, 2015, and subsequently approved by City Council.

The park and its connection to the neighborhood are in line with the City Council's adoption of the Complete Streets policy. The proposed park plans to connect travel networks, by way of sidewalk, and interior decomposed granite pathway. This will allow a connection for biking and walking and facilitates safe and convenient travel routes. The park will be owned and maintained by the City of Austin.

PROJECT INFORMATION

SITE AREA	1,306,800 square feet	30 acres LOC (555 acres)	
EXISTING ZONING	P, Public		
WATERSHED	Onion Creek (Suburban)		
WATERSHED ORDINANCE	Comprehensive Watershed Ordinance		
TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS	Not required because it's a COA project		
CAPITOL VIEW CORRIDOR	N/A		
PROPOSED ACCESS	Nuckols Crossing Road		
	Allowed/Required	Existing	Proposed
FLOOR-AREA RATIO	N/A	0	0
BUILDING COVERAGE	N/A	0	1280 sq. ft.
IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE	45%	12,704%	.006%
PARKING	N/A	0	64 5 bicycle spaces

*The parking is based on a special parking determination as permitted by the LDC.

EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USES

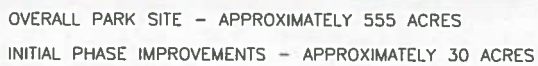
	ZONING	LAND USES
<i>Site</i>	P, Public	Undeveloped
<i>North</i>	P, Public	Undeveloped park
<i>South</i>	PUD	Vacant and Blazier Elementary School
<i>East</i>	SF-3-NP	Single family residences
<i>West</i>	P, Public	Undeveloped park

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGNIZATIONS

Austin Neighborhoods Council
 Austin Independent School District
 Home Builders Association of Greater Austin
 Homeless Neighborhood Assn.
 Bike Austin
 Onion Creek Homeowners Association
 South Park Neighbors
 Friends of Austin Neighborhoods
 Go Austin Vamos! Austin-Dove Springs
 Dove Springs Neighborhood Association
 Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group
 Dove Springs Proud
 Dove Springs Neighborhood Association
 Del Valle Community Coalition
 SEL Texas

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REVIEW AND EVALUTATION CRITERA

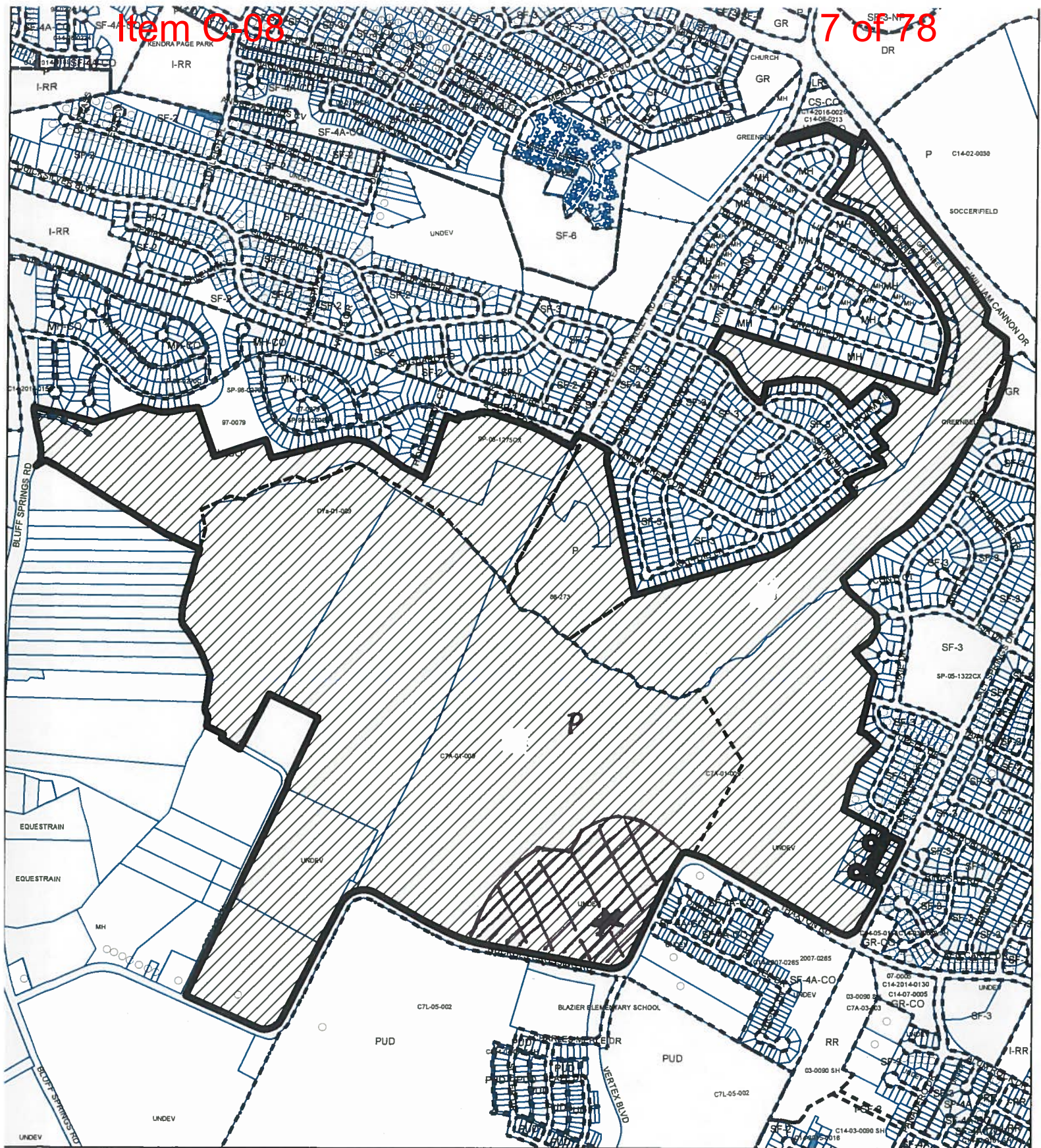
- A. The following evaluation is included to provide staff position on each point of the conditional use permit criteria. Section 25-5-145 of the Land Development Code states: "The Planning Commission shall determine whether the proposed development or use of a conditional use site plan complies with the requirements of this section. A conditional use site plan must:
- B.
1. **Comply with the requirements of this title;**
Staff Response: This site plan complies with all regulations and requirements of the Land Development Code. The project is not requesting any variances.
 2. **Comply with the objectives and purposes of the zoning district;**
Staff Response: The proposed community park is a conditional use because the zoning is P, public, however the zoning district allows for civic uses.
 3. **Have building height, bulk, scale, setback, open space, landscaping, drainage, access, traffic circulation, and use that is compatible with the use of an abutting site;**
Staff Response: The site plan proposes 2 pavilions. Detention and water quality will be provided on site, as well as parking. The project will comply with all requirements of the Land Development Code.
 4. **Provide adequate and convenient off-street parking and loading facilities; and**
Staff Response: The site plan will comply with code requirements, using the right of way for maneuvering is not being requested.
 5. **Reasonably protect persons and property from erosion, flood, fire, noise, glare, and similar adverse effects.**
Staff Response: The site plan will comply with all requirements of the Land Development Code including Compatibility Standards, and reasonably protects the health, safety, and welfare of persons and property.
 6. **For conditional use located within the East Austin Overlay district, comply with the goals and objectives of a neighborhood plan adopted by the City Council for the area in which the use is proposed.** Staff response: The proposed project is not located in the East Austin Overlay, or a neighborhood plan.
- C. In addition, a conditional use site plan may not:
7. **More adversely affect an adjoining site than would a permitted use;**
The park will have no more impact on adjoining properties and will primarily serve the neighborhood and will be open to the general public.
 8. **Adversely affect the safety or convenience of vehicular or pedestrian circulation, including reasonably anticipated traffic and uses in the area; or**
Staff Response: The site plan does not adversely affect the safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
 9. **Adversely affect an adjacent property or traffic control through the location, lighting, or type of a sign.** Staff Response: All signs and lighting will comply with the Land Development Code.






DATE PLAN RECEIVED	DATE	OF
FILE NUMBER	SECTION	APPLICATION
APPROVED BY COMMISSIONER	UNDER	SEAL
OF	THE	OF THE CITY OF ALBANY
EXPIRATION DATE (25-8-81, LOC)		
CASE NUMBER		
PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE (2000-00-00-00)		
DMPT	DD	
DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT		
RELEASED FOR GENERAL COMPLAINT		
REV. 1	CORRECTION	2
REV. 2	CORRECTION	3
REV. 3	CORRECTION	4
FINAL PLAN MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE, IF APPLICABLE. SUBSEQUENT SITE PLANS MUST BE IN ACCORD WITH THE CODE AT THE TIME OF FILING, AND ALL REQUIRED BUILDING PERMITS AND A NOTICE OF CONSTRUCTION (IF A BUILDING PERMIT IS NOT REQUIRED) MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE.		

100% SUBMITTAL





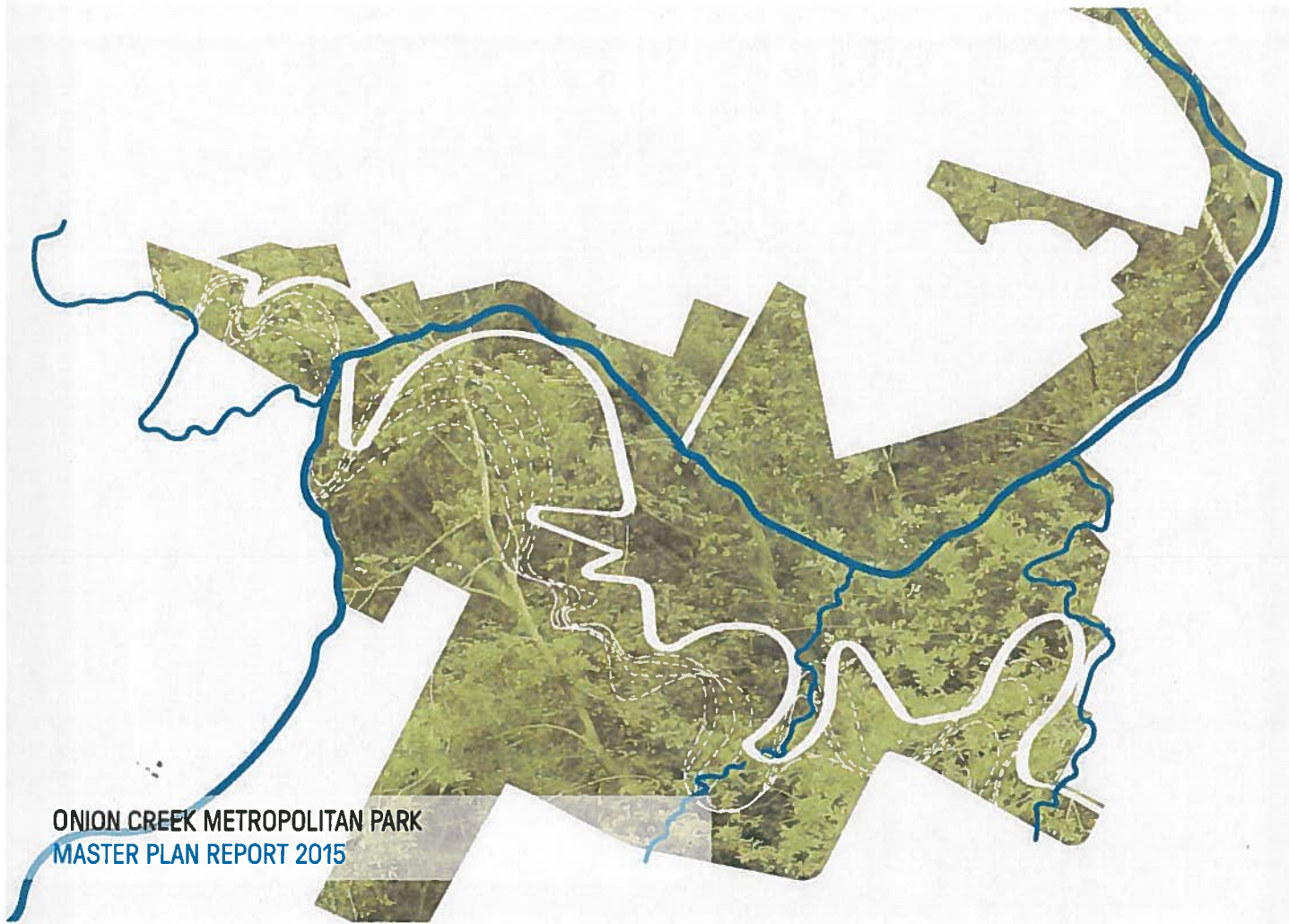
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 1,100'

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This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.





UNION CREEK METROPOLITAN PARK
MASTER PLAN REPORT 2015

ONION CREEK METROPOLITAN PARK
MASTER PLAN REPORT 2015

TEAM:



ONION CREEK METROPOLITAN PARK

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

Onion Creek Metropolitan Park

The Onion Creek Metro Park is **555-acres of parkland** located in southeast Travis County, along 2.5 miles of Onion Creek. The city-owned park is relatively flat, wooded and sits undeveloped. The 180-acre Onion Creek Greenbelt is north of the Onion Creek, which is 79 miles in length. The Onion Creek Metro Park was purchased by the City of Austin in the late 1990s, making it the largest city-owned park in Austin. Nearly 15 years later, a new special district creates a funding source and opportunity for long-term, ongoing maintenance to be used to build and maintain the parkland.

Answering the question, "What can OCMP become?" is the central focus of the Onion Creek Metro Park Master Plan. Based on **input from residents, community leaders and city planners**, a master plan was developed for the 555-acre regional park. The master planning process was conducted in two phases and took into account input from nearby residents, as well as the general public.

PHASE 1 - Vision Plan : Presents the framework and goals of the project.

PHASE 2 - Master Plan : Presents the site program, layout and character of the project

The Following Master Plan Report:

-Provides a **site inventory and analysis of environmental opportunities and constraints**.

-Compares projects of similar size, context, and user demographics.

-Establishes **park character relative to ecology**, historic and cultural significance, anticipated users, economics, and **long term maintenance**.

-Informed a master plan where planners incorporated **highly developed design solutions** for landscape types, activities, and programming needs, relative to site specific form, function, cost, and phasing.

Austinites were asked to think about what they would like to **see in the park over the next 20 years**. They were also asked to place a value ranking on

- Environmental Sustainability
- Access to Natural Open Spaces
- Community Connections
- Regional Park and Trail Connections
- Culture Based Programs
- Education Opportunities

In addition to public input, **ecology** has also played an important role in the search for an **identity for the park**. Onion Creek Metro Park is located in the Southeastern part of Austin, an area rapidly growing and developing to meet the city's housing demands. The site occupies 555 acres in a **181,106 acre watershed** along 2.5 miles of Onion Creek. Over half the site is located in the floodplain. Water is a key organizational strategy of the project.

The **changes in topography and soil types** across the site support a variety of ecological communities such as loamy bottomland forest and oak savannahs. Moving forward, the goal will be to assess and amend the health of these unique vegetation communities through management.

The vision plan was informed in part by input from the public meeting and site analysis information collected during the investigation. The vision plan is **sensitive to existing conditions on site** and projects potential character typologies. The four typologies (Natural,

Passive, Active, and Cultural) provide a spectrum for interventions in the park.

Interventions in the park include ideas for:

- Improvements to open spaces and the Onion Creek riparian corridor.
- Accessible trails for walking, running,
- Existing dog park
- Existing equestrian activities
- Play fields
- Areas in the park for gatherings.
- Recreation or multi-entertainment facilities
- Exercise areas
- Educational opportunities

Onion Creek Metro Park will be a park of **multi-faceted character**. It will meet the needs of a **regional population** as well as a **local population**. These park users will have the ability to participate and engage in a variety of activities that are both planned and spontaneous. The cross-section of activities and spaces within the park will represent the cross-section of the people who will use this park. There will be something to do ranging from observation of nature and leisure time to more active moments and cultural events. The vision for Onion Creek Metropolitan Park is one of **inclusivity for all ages, abilities, social economic statuses and variety of interests**.

The Austin Parks Foundation led the planning process in collaboration with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department. The Master Plan was completed in the summer of 2015.



NATURAL



PASSIVE

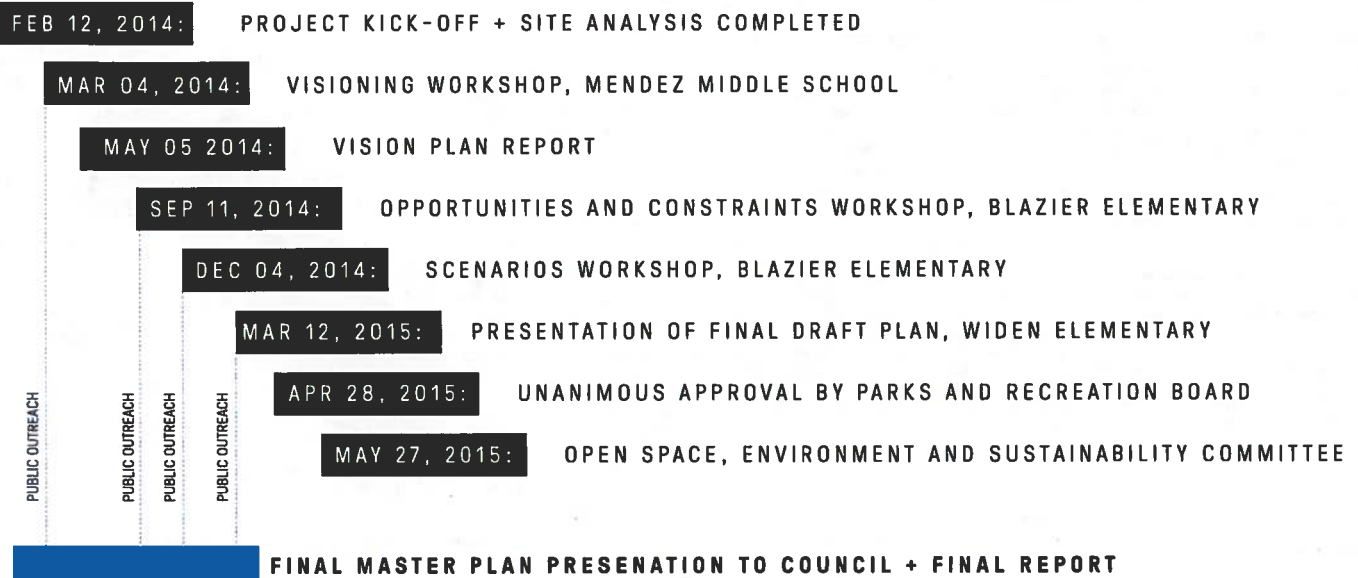


ACTIVE



CULTURAL

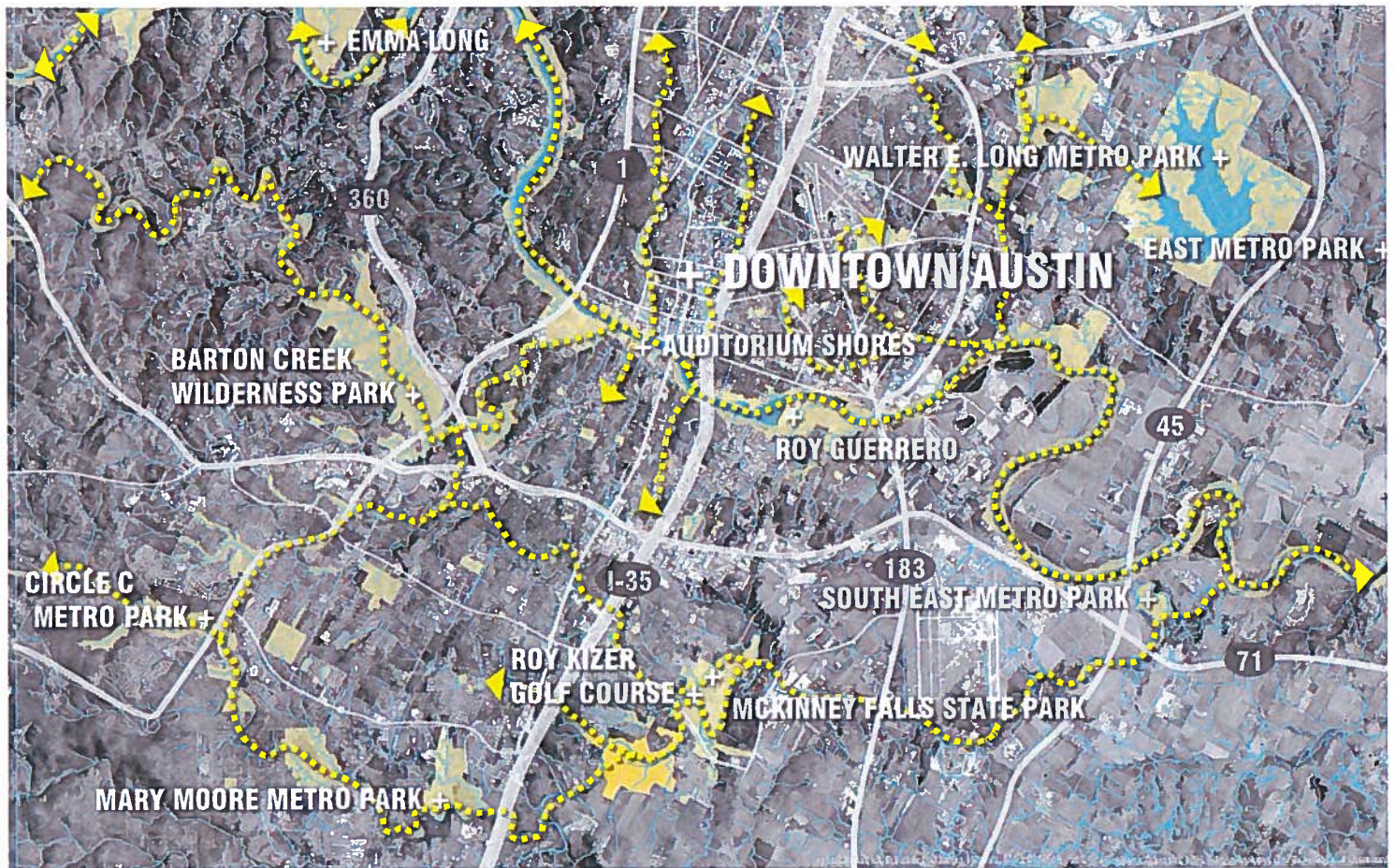
TIMELINE



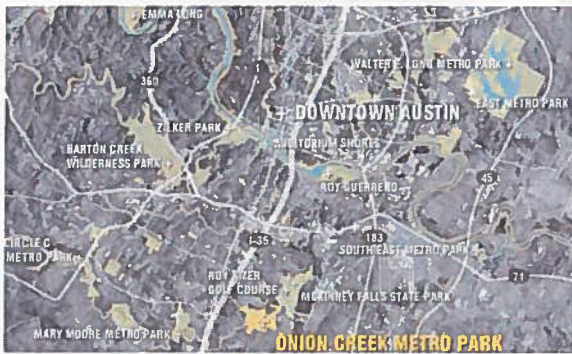
SCOPE OF WORK

STAGE 1.0	SITE ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH
STAGE 2.0	VISIONING WORKSHOP
STAGE 3.0	VISION PLAN
STAGE 4.0	OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS WORKSHOP
STAGE 5.0	PARK PROGRAMMING AND FRAMEWORK PLAN ALTERNATIVES
STAGE 6.0	SCENARIOS WORKSHOP
STAGE 7.0	PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN
STAGE 8.0	FINAL DRAFT PLAN PRESENTATION

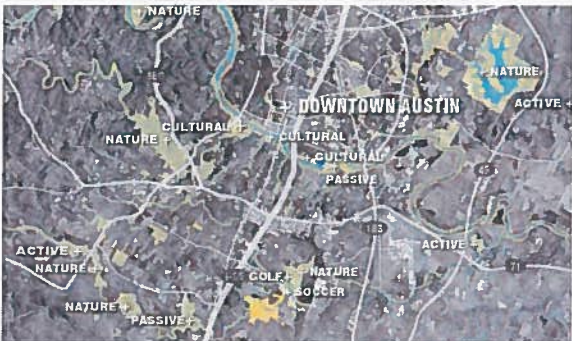




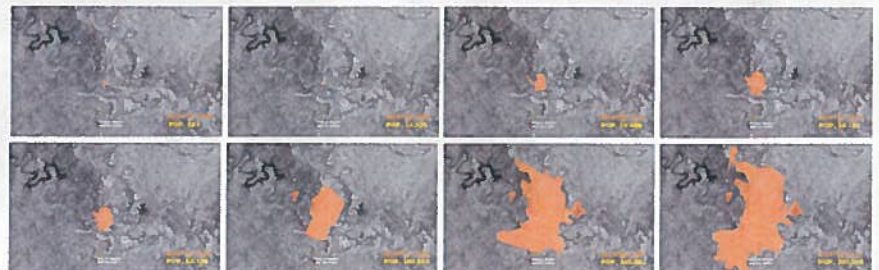
Greenway Connectivity Map



Existing Parks + Greenspace



Existing Parks + Greenspace Character



Historic Growth Trends

GREEN CORRIDORS

Onion Creek Metropolitan Park is 550 acres of parkland located in Southeast Austin in an area projected to grow rapidly by 2039. The design team's scope of work included providing a Vision Plan, Framework Plan and finally a Master Plan that incorporated a variety of stakeholders' needs and desires.

One of the most defining challenges/opportunities the design team faced when shaping the project was the need to balance the existing neighborhood's daily use of the park and desire to keep the land largely undeveloped with the imminent need to re-imagine the land as a regional park serving a greater population yet to come.

Goodnight, is a special district south of the park expected to add over 3,533 households to the area adjacent to the site.

AUSTIN PARKS PARQUES DE AUSTIN



ZILKER METRO PARK



AUSTIN PARK CHARACTER CARACTERES DE LOS PARQUES



ROY G. GUERRERO RIVER PARK



GREENWAY CONNECTIONS CONEXIONES POR VÍAS VERDES



MCKINNEY FALLS STATE PARK



Local Park Precedents

BRAZOS RIVER PARK

SUGARLAND, TEXAS
2001, 2004-07

486 ACRES
FORMER FARMLAND
RIVER RESTORATION
ROOMS WITHIN A LANDSCAPE



AMPHITHEATER
NATURE CENTER
DOG PARK
PAVILIONS
PLAYGROUND
COMBINATION
MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS
FAMILY CRESTED
FESTIVAL WIFE
CRICKET FIELD
MOUNTAIN SHEDS
BASKETBALL COURTS
DISC GOLF
CAMPING
POND AREAS
HYPERLOOPS
NATURE TRAILS
PASTURE
LAKES
MEADOWS
POYDS
LEGEND
NATURE
PASSIVE
ACTIVE
CULTURAL



PHIL HARDENBERGER PARK

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
4700+ ACRES
2000-2005

311 ACRES
FORMER DAIRY FARM
FRAMED SPACES
75% PRESERVATION
25% RECREATION



EDUCATION CENTER
POND AREAS
OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS
PLAYGROUND
DOG PARK
BASKETBALL
TRAIL SYSTEM
OPEN FIELDS
DISC GOLF
RESTORATION
PRESERVATION
WILDLIFE HIDEOUTS
URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER
WATER CONSERVATION



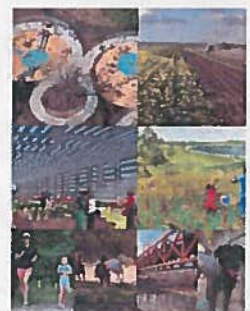
SHELBY FARMS PARK

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
2000-2005

4500 ACRES
FORMER FARMLAND
PROGRAMMATIC SPINE



DOG PARK
BOULEVARD CENTER
DISC GOLF
PARK TO FORM FELLOWS
SOUP
LATER TAG PAINTBALL
POND AREAS
AMPHITHEATER
ART MOUNTAINS
KITE FLYING AREA
OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS
WEDGEMANS
ADVENTURE PLAY
EXTENSIVE TRAIL
EARTH DAY IN
DISC GOLF
DISC
RECREATIONAL LANE
BOATING



NATURE

PASSIVE

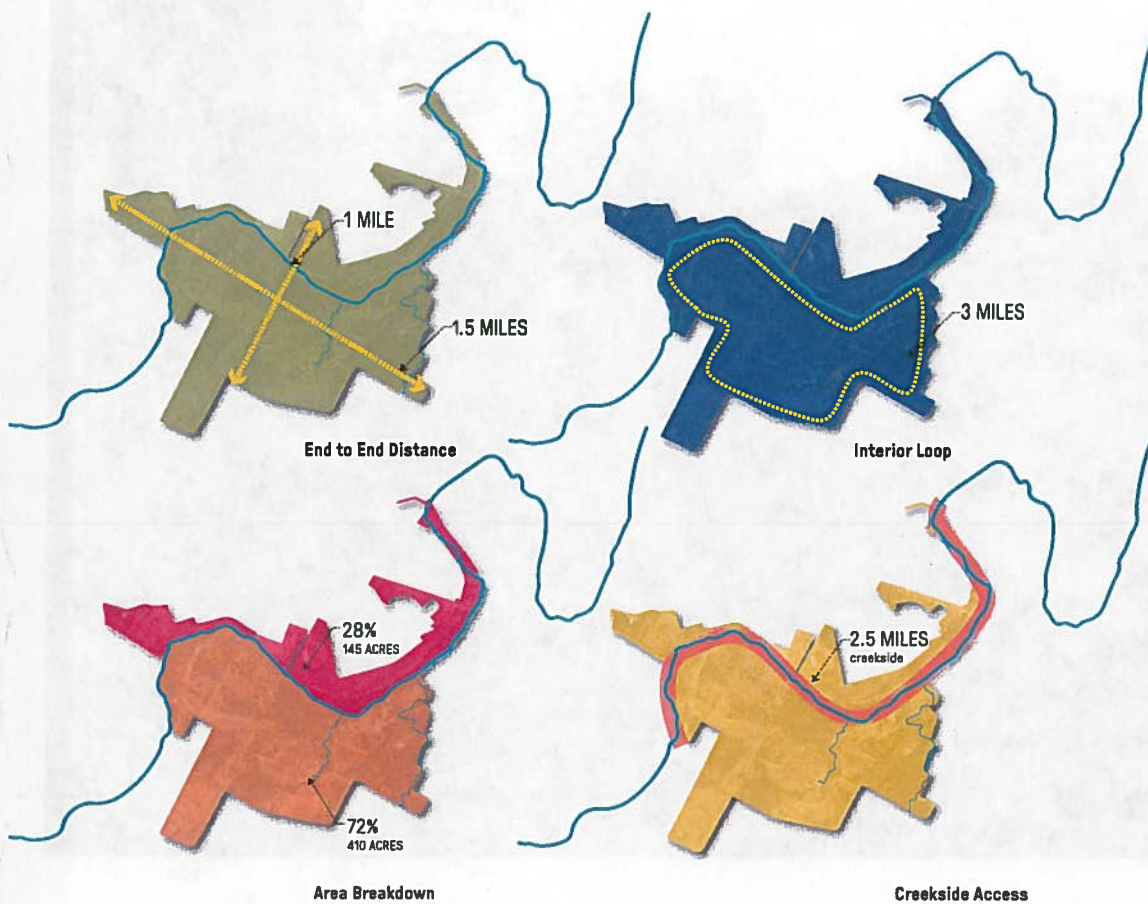
ACTIVE

CULTURAL

Similar Scale Park Precedents



Site Context



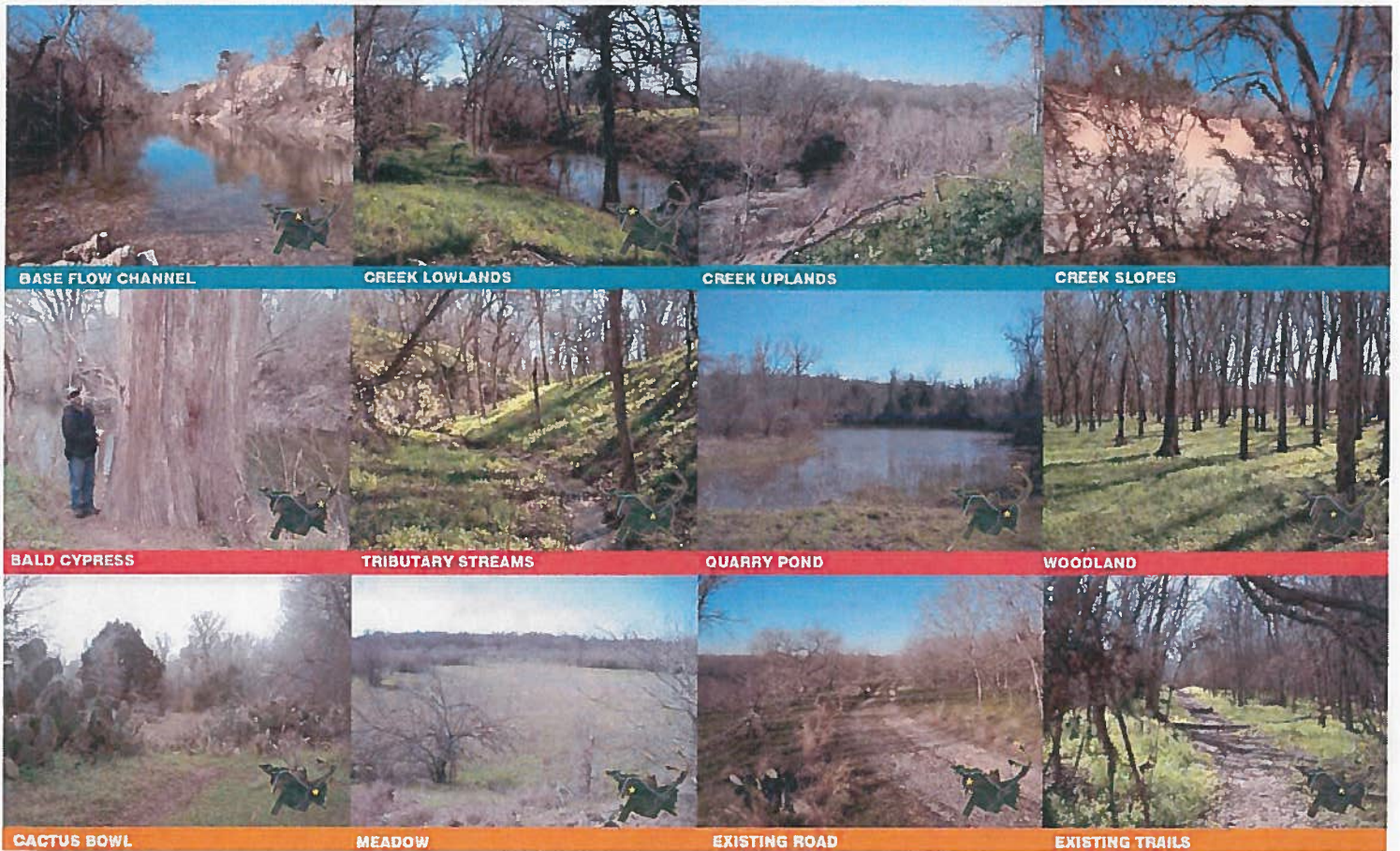
EXISTING CONDITIONS

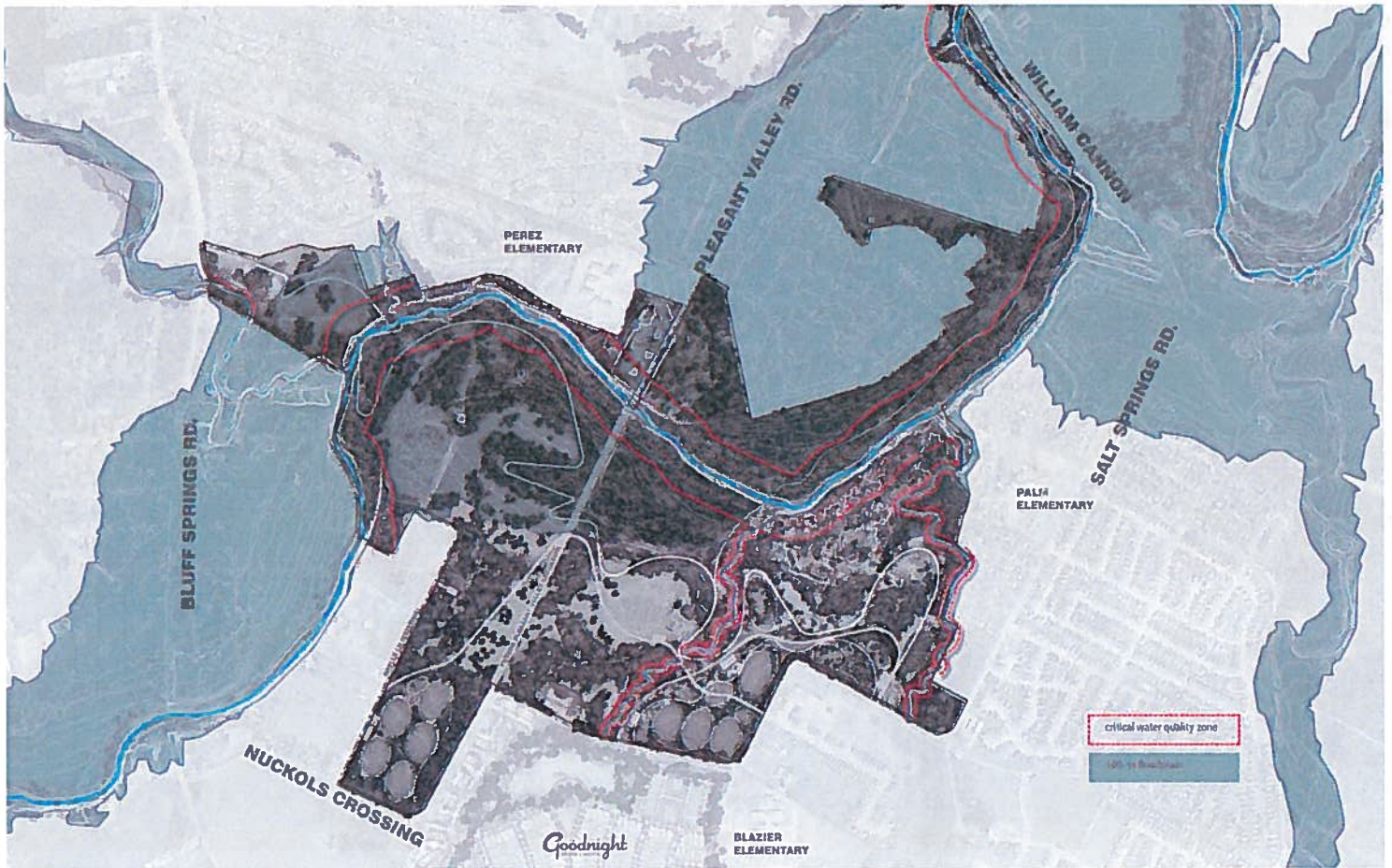
Onion Creek Metropolitan Park also sits as a significant connection east to west along the Onion Creek Greenbelt, stitching into the Onion Creek Soccer Complex and McKinney Falls State Park.

Directly adjacent to the park sit three elementary schools. The park is an excellent opportunity to provide educational and athletic opportunities to these children.

Situated across the west side of the park are a series of horse farms. These equestrians currently use the on a regular basis. This existing program was incorporated into the master plan for the park after input from this set of stakeholders.







Regulatory Constraints



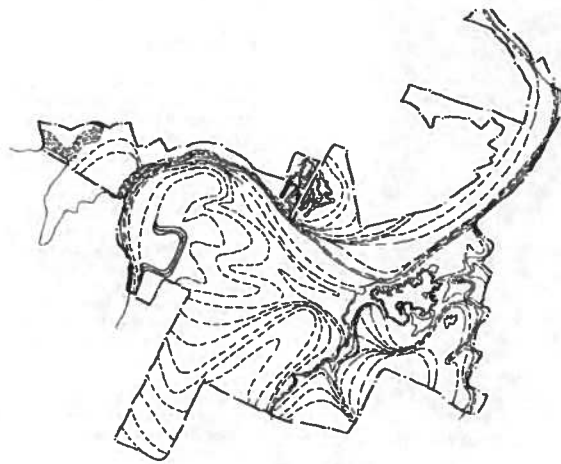
FLOODPLAIN DEFINITION

The 100-year floodplain is the land that is predicted to flood during a 100-year storm, which has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. You may also hear the 100-year floodplain called the 1% annual chance floodplain or base flood. Areas within the 100-year floodplain may flood in much smaller storms as well. The 100-year floodplain is used by FEMA to administer the federal flood insurance program and the City of Austin to regulate development.

Additionally, the US Army Corps of Engineers is currently in the process of designing and building adjacent park facilities to the north of our site as a separate project.



Floodplain Constraints on Program



Landform Pattern

+



Canopy and Open Field Pattern

TOPOGRAPHY

SLOPE: How quickly does the elevation change?

ASPECT: Which direction does the slope face?

DRAINAGE: Where does the water flow?



VEGETATION PATTERNS

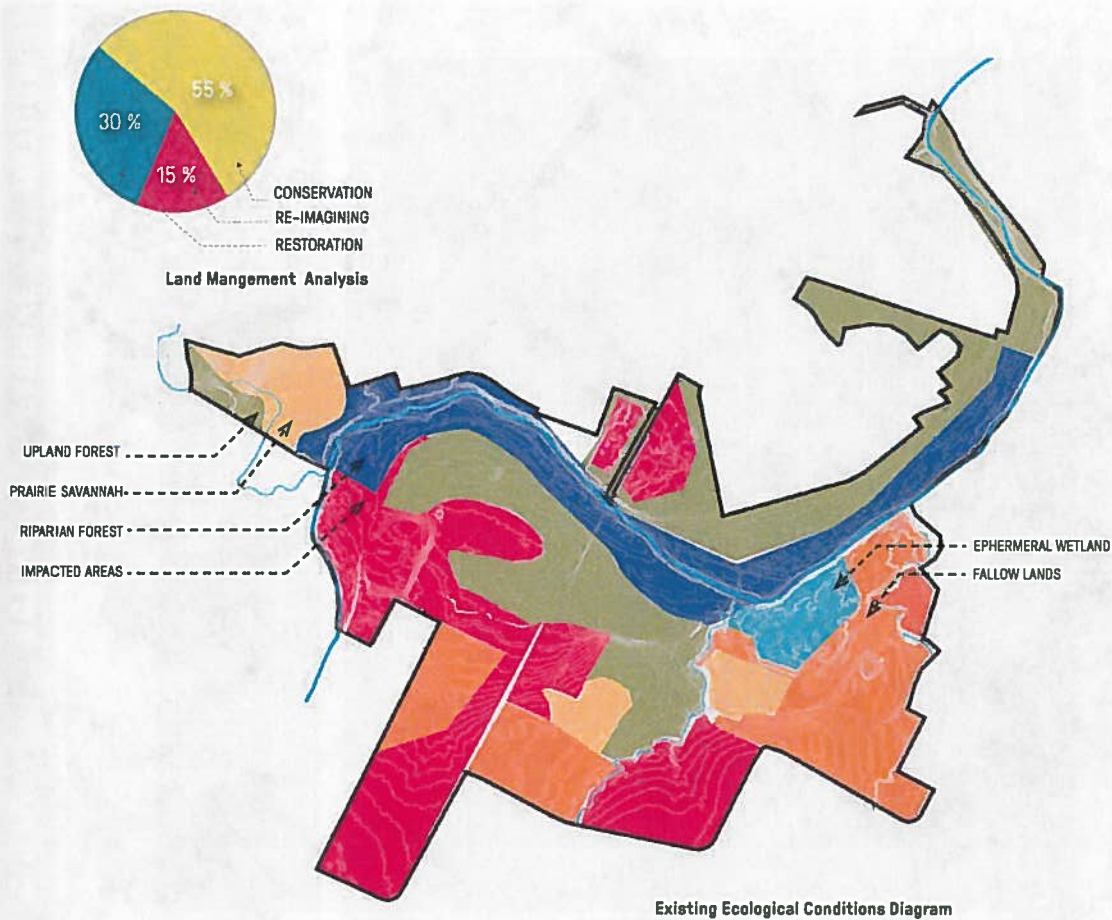
COMMUNITY: What type of plant community is present?

SPECIES COMPOSITION: What type of species are growing in a given area?

COVERAGE: How much of the ground is covered in vegetation?

DENSITY: How far apart are plants growing from each other?





ECOLOGY

The ecological site analysis conducted by the design team provided the framework on which many of the decisions regarding character, program and access were made. New program is concentrated in areas with low ecological value and easy access with respect to existing topographic conditions. Approximately 85% of the site is devoted to restoration and conservation of ecosystem services. Currently, the geomorphology of the site supports four major ecological communities.

UPLAND FOREST consists of a hardwood canopy coverage greater than 40%. Understory consists of shrubs such as Mexican Buckeye and cool season grasses such as Texas Wintergrass and Cedar Sedge. Shade loving vegetation like Inland Sea Oats will also find their niche in this community.

RIPARIAN FOREST structures itself around water. Mature Bald Cypress trees can be found dotting the banks of the creek as well as forb species such as Phlox and Chervil. These areas are opportunities to do restoration and low impact development as well as provide opportunities for education and engagement with the water.

EPHEMERAL WETLANDS occur adjacent to this community where topography allows water to pool after large rain events.

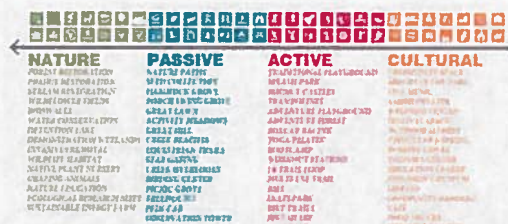
PRAIRIE is present where there are deeper soils that provide the depth midgrasses such as silverbluestem and Side Oats Grama thrive in. Also present in this community are annual wildflowers such as Indian Blanket, Horsemint, and Black-Eyed Susan. Hardwood canopy cover is less than 15%. The structure of this community provides habitat for several of the species that migrate through central Texas. **SAVANNAH** occurs where there is typically between 15-30% hardwood canopy coverage and an understory comprised of short to mid grasses and forbs.

Historically, landuse patterns on the site included agricultural practices and mining activities. These have resulted in **HIGHLY IMPACTED AREAS** and **FALLOW LANDS** which produce very little in terms of ecosystem services but offer opportunity for program.



Vision Plan





VISION PLAN ANALYSIS

Both the ecological study and the results from the public survey informed the zoning of the vision plan. Areas that were performing at a healthy ecological function should be preserved and engaged with programs reflected in the

NATURAL + PASSIVE categories. Areas with poor ecological performance can be enhanced with **ACTIVE + CULTURAL** programs.

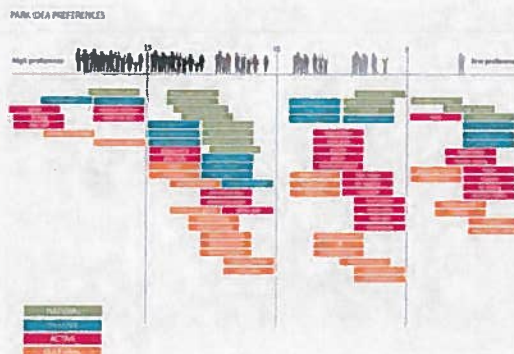
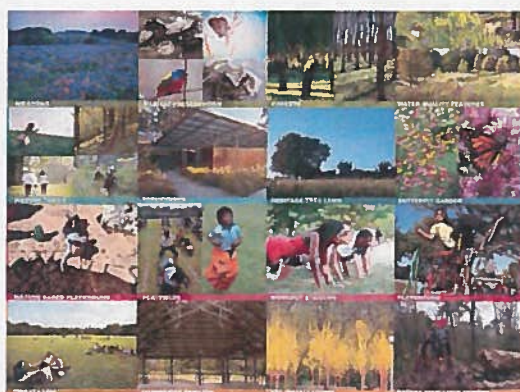
Considerable amount of vocal support at the VISIONING WORKSHOP related to nature and passive program with a large desire to keep the park as natural as possible, particularly the core of the site along the creek.

The Vision Plan illustrates a large percentage of the site devoted to **NATURAL** buffered by **PASSIVE** program with the goal being to preserve the area of the site with the most sensitivity and highest output of ecosystem services. These areas relate directly to their relationship to Onion Creek and the tributary streams that flow into it.

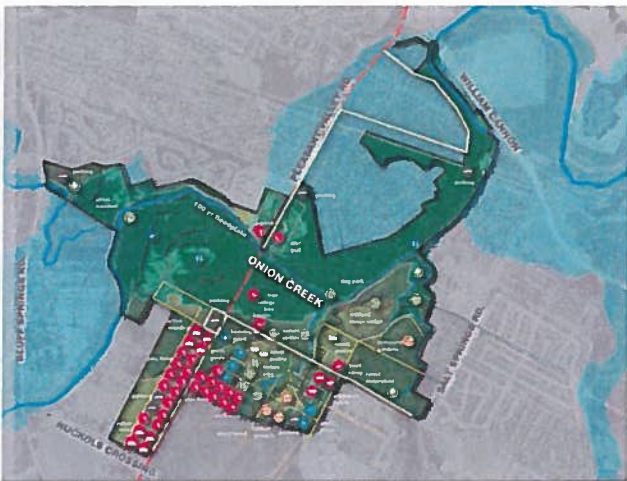
ACTIVE program was distributed in areas with the most potential to make neighborhood connections or in areas where the previous land use impaired the site's ability to be a healthy, self-regulating ecosystem.

CULTURAL nodes were woven into areas of passive recreation mostly kept out of the floodplain.

Floodplain analysis played an important role in the investigation of program possibilities as more than 50% of the site is within the 100- YR Floodplain, constraining the development. Programs that could be designed to survive temporary flooded conditions such as great lawns, amphitheaters and adventure forests were proposed within the floodplain. Structures and activities such as the nature center and community event center were proposed in areas of high ground, outside of the floodplain.







Framework Plan Study



Framework Plan Study



Program Size Comparison

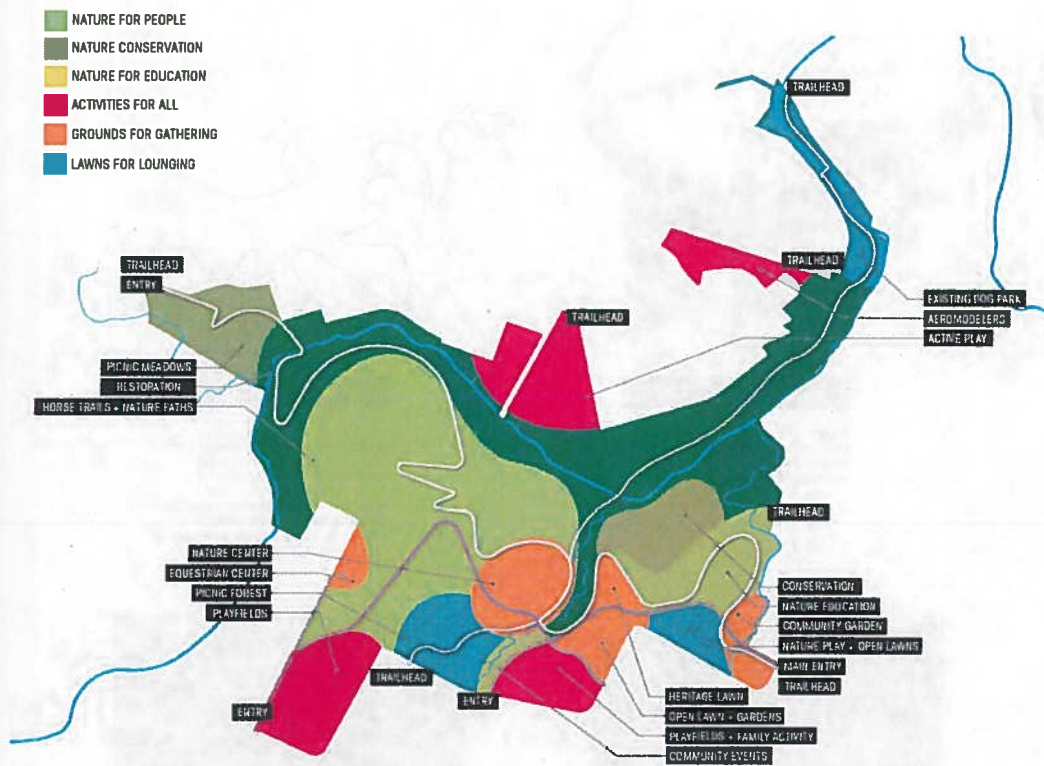
FRAMEWORK PLAN

The purpose of the Framework Plan is to identify and develop the specific programmatic elements and general areas that will be incorporated into the more detailed Master Plan design of the park.

The team developed the Framework alternatives for the Master Plan based on site analysis including ecological studies, existing uses and input collected from the first public meeting as well as the online survey posted on the City of Austin's website.

This document suggests the character of the uses on site as well as a general location and approximate size of space required for each.





Program Diagram

MASTER PLAN

The site is a patchwork matrix of significant ecological communities, including Upland Forest complex, Prairie Savannah, Riparian Woodland and Ephemeral Wetlands which sit atop swirling and swooping topography. The different ecologies of the park unfold along a ribbon like pathway - "The Topographic Ribbon" - that follows the bends and folds of the landscape, weaving the visitor through a rich tapestry of ecological and programmatic characters.

Along the Topographic Ribbon, park users are introduced to a variety of activities, and spaces. The range of programs incorporated into the final Master Plan include areas for active recreation, nature based play, community events, unique sports such as parkour and nature education. The programs take advantage of the site's wide range of character and are situated so that they have the least impact possible on valuable habitat lands and restore use to areas that have been allowed to go fallow and become over grown with invasive species.

Over 50% of the park is in the floodplain, along a volatile creek with development restrictions. The Master Plan took a very light touch approach to these areas, laying out a trail system that allows the visitor to engage the sensitive wetland habitat without compromising its integrity.

Additionally, extensive rain gardens are featured around areas with high program, intended to catch water from parking lots and hardscape to be cleaned before being slowly released back into the watershed.



TOPOGRAPHY

FROM GENTLY SLOPING PLAINS TO STEEP RIDGES DROPPING SEVERAL FEET, THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE PROVIDES THE FOUNDATION FOR A DIVERSE COMMUNITIES OF VEGETATION AND HABITAT.



VEGETATION PATTERNS

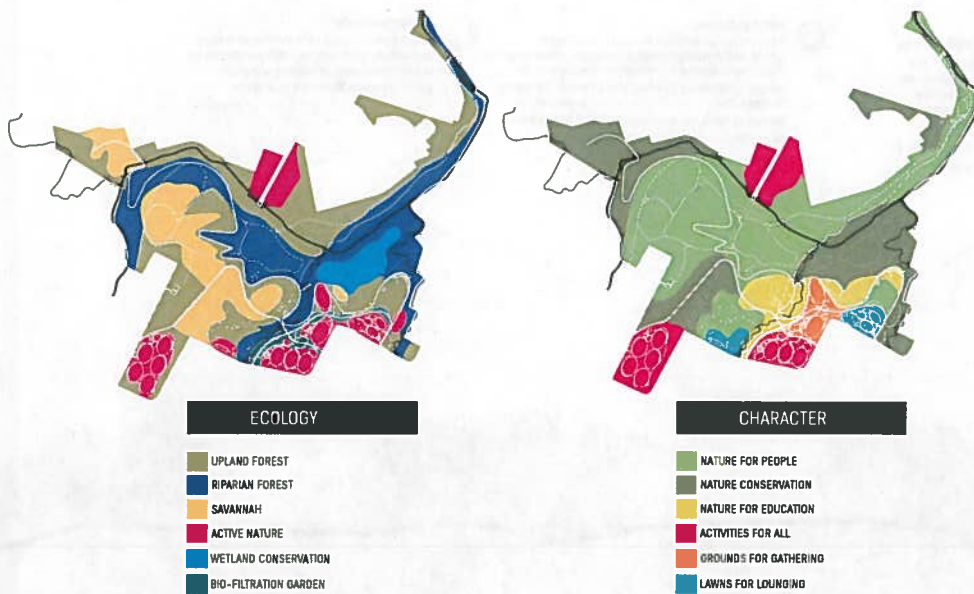
THE SITE HAS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF EXISTING ECOLOGIES RANGING FROM RIPARIAN FOREST TO OAK SAVANNAH. OVER HALF THE SITE IS SHADED UNDERNEATH TREE COVER.



TOPOGRAPHIC RIBBON

THE DIFFERENT ECOLOGIES OF THE PARK UNFOLD ALONG A RIBBON-LIKE PATHWAY THAT FOLLOWS THE BENDS AND FOLDS OF THE TOPOGRAPHY AND FOREST, WEAVING THE VISITOR THROUGH A RICH TAPESTRY OF ECOLOGICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC CHARACTERS. ALONG THIS PATH, PARK USERS ARE INTRODUCED TO A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES AND SPACES.





DESIGN PROCESS

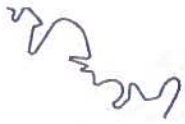
In the tradition of landscape analysis that has its roots with Ian McHarg and the seminal text "Design with Nature," the Onion Creek Metro Park design process uses a technique of layering site analysis to reveal overlapping patterns that pair with functional programming needs.

The Master Plan is a design where opportunities arise from site constraints and challenges in that the existing conditions of the site set the tone for where change should occur and where conservation should be a priority.

The conservation approach was supported by public input and feedback as well as the project team site field surveys. Many of the existing park visitors use the trails, topography and vegetation patterns to orient themselves on the site and identify those as markers of a "beautiful" park.

The design of the park negotiates between the different desires of the stakeholder groups involved as well as the needs of the environment.

Some areas of landscape have the potential to become a vibrant and healthy, self regulating system with little intervention. Other areas are prime for re-imagining of use as they are currently in states of degradation or have existing or future user conflicts. The layering of this analysis set up the framework for the programmatic and circulation strategies of the design, resulting in a palette of unique ecological and active characters.



INFILTRATION + RECHARGE

Grasslands can yield approximately **100,000 gallons per acre of water recharge** over the course of a year. This is equal to the amount of water the average Austinian uses in that same year. By increasing the amount of **prairies and meadows** in the park to **15%**, the site's potential for water recharge has increased to approximately **8.25 million gallons of water** or equivalent to **82.5 Austinians**.



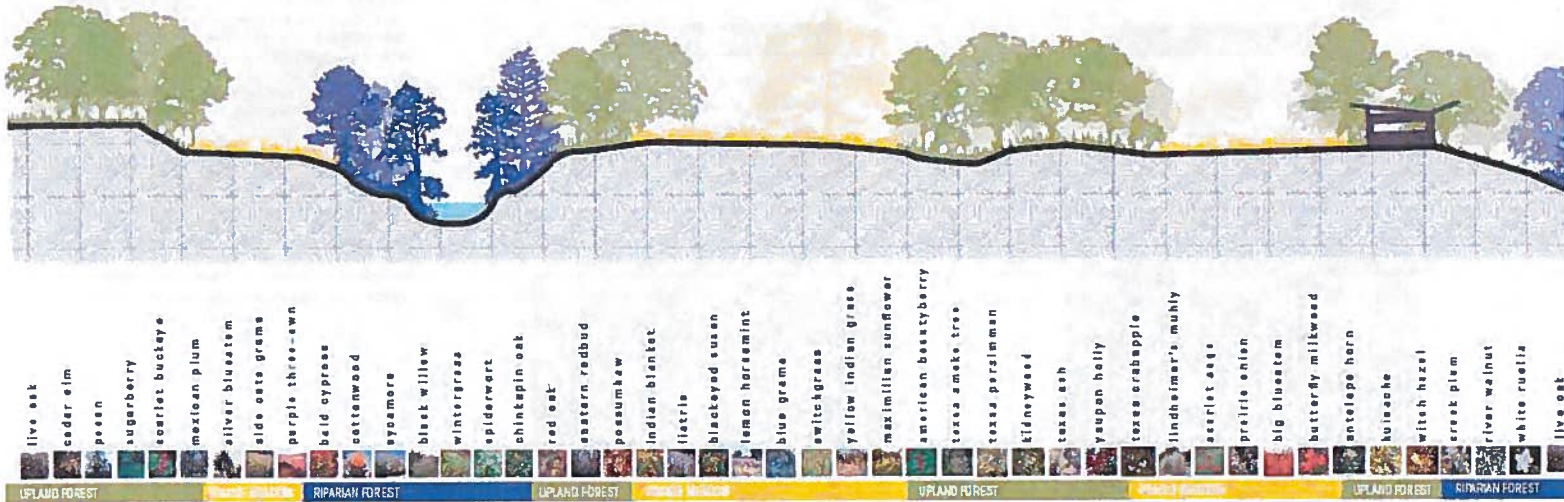
WATER CLEANSING

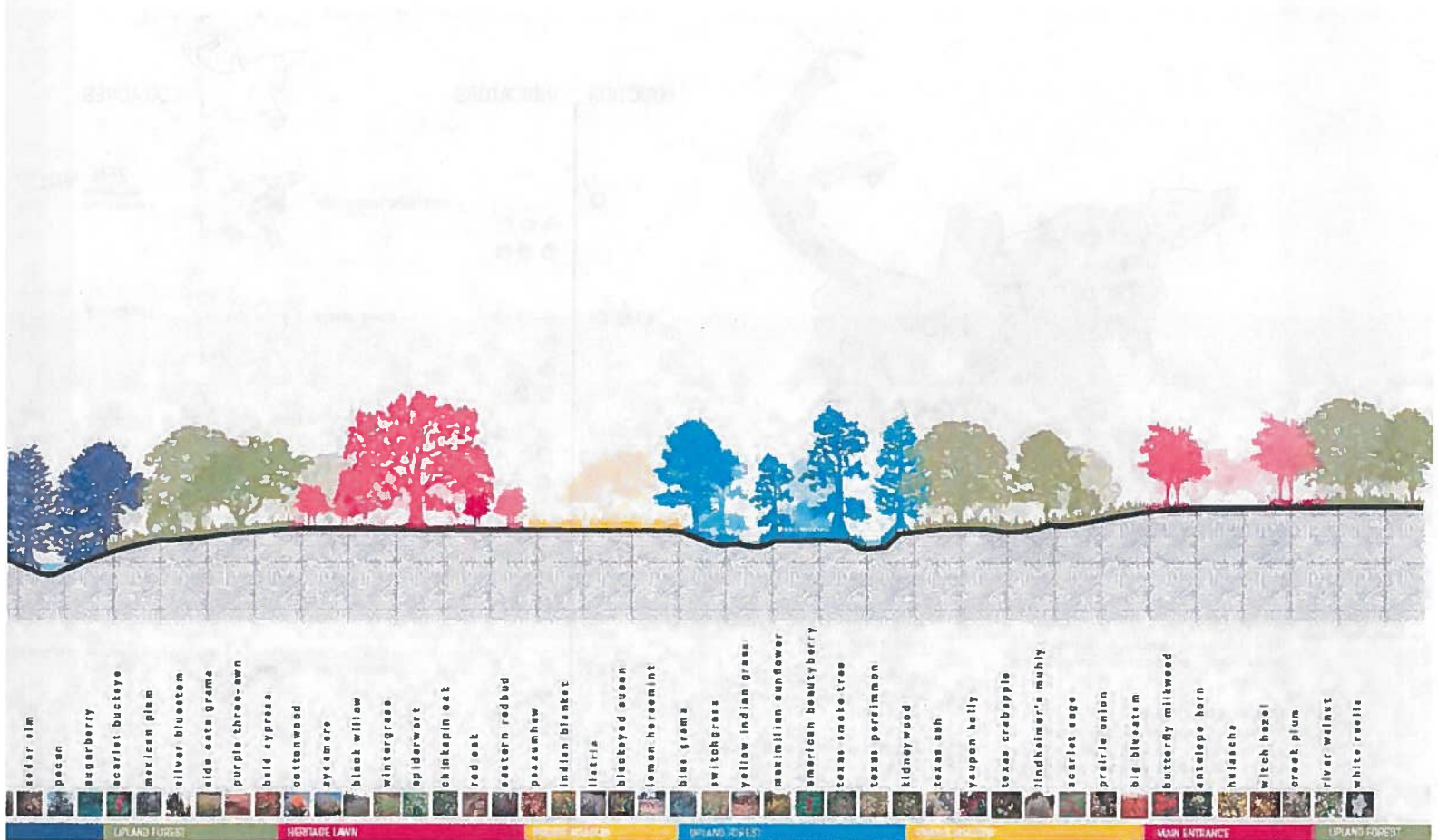
Warm season grasses can be used to treat water run-off and remove pollution. Switchgrass, Yellow Indian Grass and Maximilian Sunflower have the capacity to remove approximately **11 kilograms of solids** for every hectare. The **prairies and meadows** in Onion Creek Metro Park can remove approximately **370 kilograms of solids**, or almost half a ton.



HABITAT DIVERSITY

The diversity in grasslands provides necessary elements to many species which are considered vulnerable because of habitat loss such as the Monarch Butterfly that needs the **native variety of milkweed** to survive.







EXISTING ECOLOGY

FUNCTION



HIGH FUNCTION: high level of bio-diversity, little to no invasive species, no damage from previous land-use, able to produce ecosystem services.



MODERATE FUNCTION: some level of bio-diversity, some coverage of invasive species, little damage from previous land-use, able to produce some ecosystem services but not all.



IMPAIRED FUNCTION: little bio-diversity, high level of invasive species coverage, damage from previous land-use, little ability to produce ecosystem services.

INDICATORS



BIO-DIVERSITY: number of different species present in community



INVASIVE SPECIES COUNT: coverage of aggressive not native species decreasing bio-diversity



HISTORIC LAND-USE PATTERNS: impact of previous land management



WATER QUALITY: ability to improve water quality through remediation and re-charge

FUNCTION INDICATORS



HIGHLY IMPACTED CONDITIONS

PRAIRIE/MEADOW

UPLAND FOREST

IMPACTED CONDITIONS

RIPARIAN FOREST

EPHEMERAL WETLAND

550 ACRES

25%
RESTORATION
+ RE-IMAGINING

5%
CONSERVATION

25%
CONSERVATION

20%
RESTORATION
+ RE-IMAGINING

20%
CONSERVATION

5%
CONSERVATION

550 ACRE PARK



+ 10%
+ 5% → **15%**



ACTIVE NATURE

+ 10%
+ 5% → **15%**



PRAIRIE/MEADOW

+ 10%
+ 5% → **35%**



UPLAND FOREST

+ 5% → **5%**



BIO-FILTRATION GARDEN

+ 5% → **25%**



RIPARIAN FOREST

→ **5%**



EPHEMERAL WETLAND

INDICATORS

FUNCTION



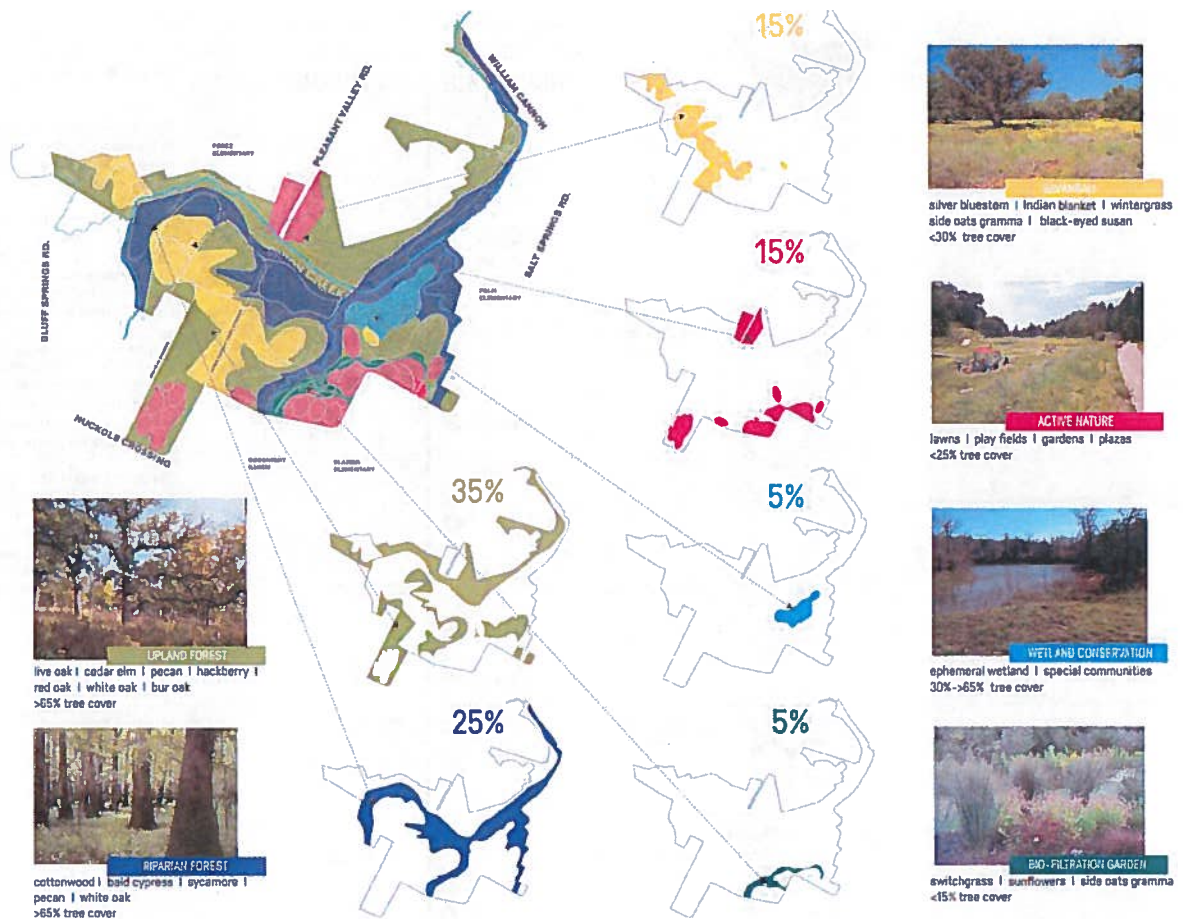
METRICS

Ecosystem Services are a product of healthy relationships in the environment which produce vital resources such as clean air, clean water, habitat and climate regulation.

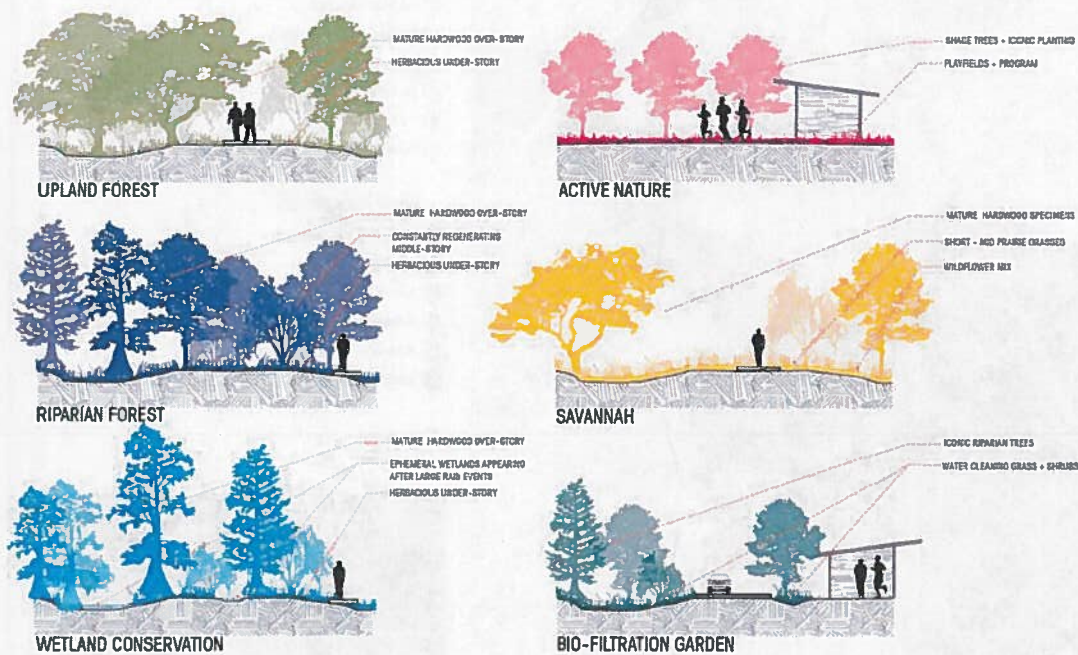
The interactions that produce these ecosystem services include, nutrient exchange between soil and plant roots, water cleaning through phytoremediation that takes place between water and plant biomass as well as air quality improvements that happen on a cellular level between plants and the atmosphere.

In order for these process to improve function, certain bio-physical conditions must exist. For example, ample vegetation coverage is necessary to not only prevent erosion, but to keep invasive species from colonizing. A primary goal of this Master Plan is to improve the water quality of stormwater re-entering Onion Creek.

The Onion Creek Master Plan improves water quality by restoring the historic prairie savannah communities once present on site. This particular community has the potential to filter approximately 100,000 gallons of water per acre, over the course of a year. By increasing the coverage of praires and meadows on site, the site's capacity for recharge will increase by approximately 8.25 million additional gallons per year.



Landscape Ecologies



Ecology Character Sections

MASTER PLAN ECOLOGY**EPHEMERAL WETLAND:**

Area that is periodically full of water and supports unique plant communities such as ferns and other species that can survive in both wet and dry conditions.

RIPARIAN:

Area that is found on the banks of a water body with typically moist soils

RESTORATION:

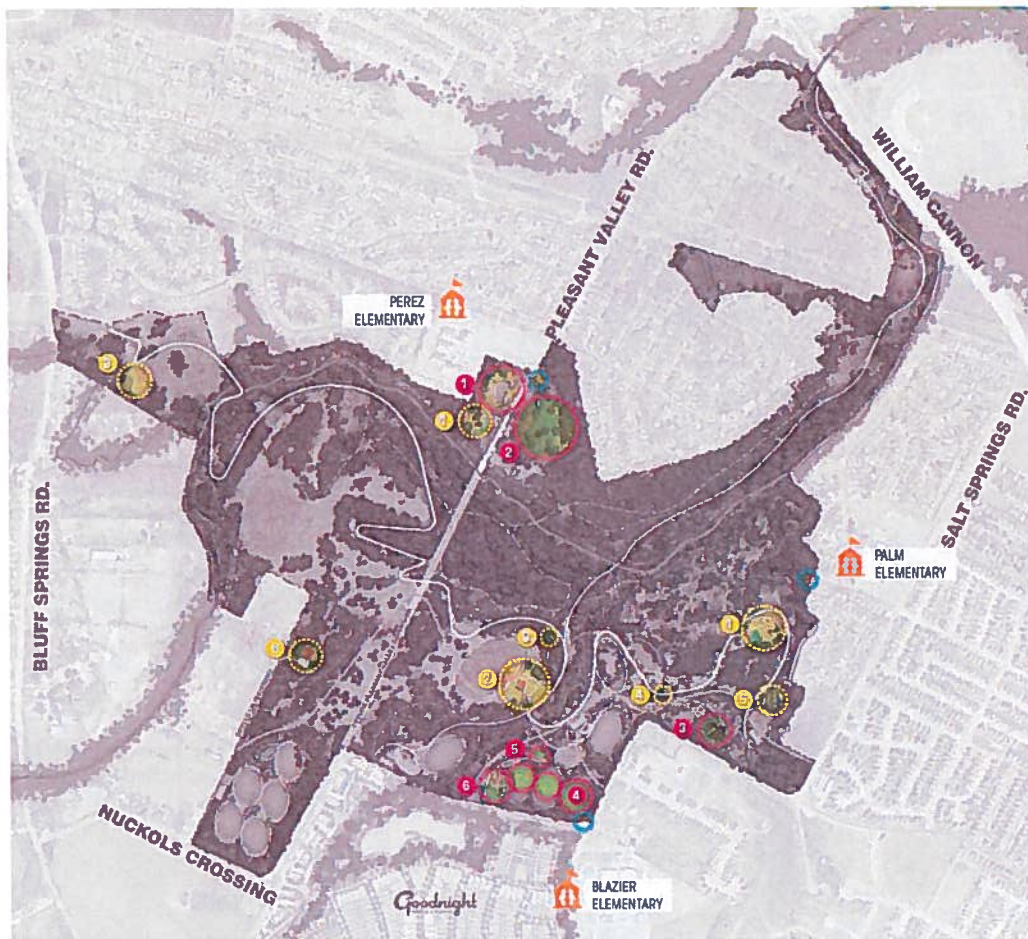
Actively introducing management and maintenance cycles to regenerate natural processes in a landscape that was previously not functioning

CONSERVATION:

Actively protecting a portion of the landscape that is functioning well without intervention

BIO-FILTRATION:

Removing chemicals, toxins and solids from storm water through plant filtration



Union Creek Metropolitan Park Amenities for Local Schools

CULTURAL/EDUCATIONAL

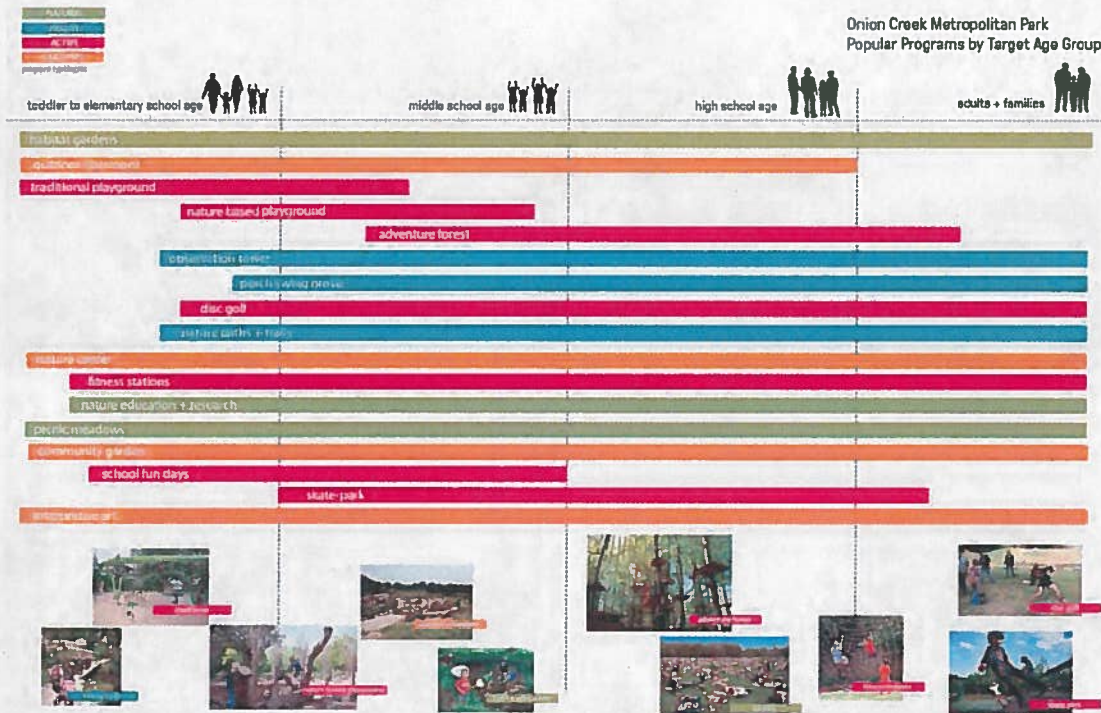
- 1 Outdoor Classroom
- 2 Nature Center with Library
- 3 Interpretive Learning Stations
- 4 Observation Tower
- 5 Community Garden
- 6 Equestrian Center

ACTIVE/RECREATIONAL

- 1 Skate Park + Parkour
- 2 Disc Golf
- 3 Nature Based Playground/ Adventure Forest
- 4 Playfields
- 5 Multi-Age Fitness Stations
- 6 Traditional Playground

TRAILHEAD





TARGETED USERS

Part of the goal in the Master Plan is to appeal to a wide variety of users. South Austin is a diverse population spanning a variety of age groups and family models.

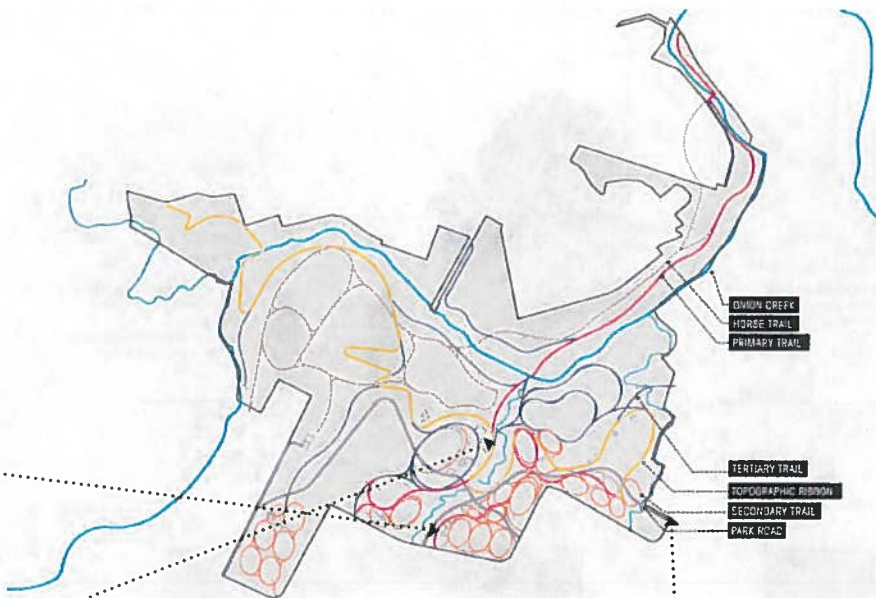
The spectrum of programs in the park allow for users of all ages to enjoy the rich natural setting in a variety of ways regardless of physical ability.

Program such as adventure play can be tailored to multiple age groups by designing structures that increase in complexity as targeted age groups advance.

Play and active recreation is an important component of the park as the Master Plan focuses not only on healthy ecosystems but healthy lifestyles as well. Fitness station and miles of trails work complement the community garden as a marker of health and wellness appreciation in the park.

Public engagement played an important role in sorting out the mix by giving voice to the wide slice of the community that is actively engaged in the planning of Onion Creek Metro Park. The audience ranged from neighbors to the park within walking distance to users from the larger Austin metroplex. This park negotiates its identity between being a community/neighborhood park and being a regional park for the larger area.





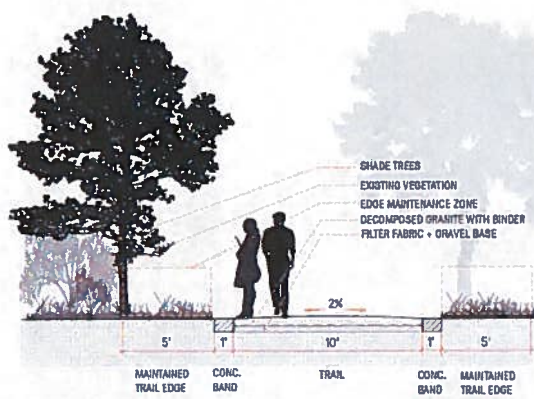
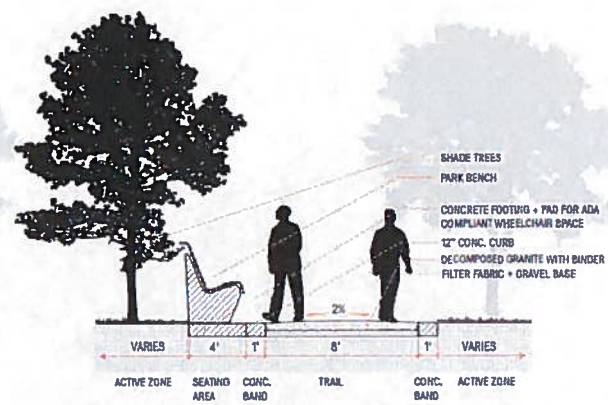
Main Entry Character

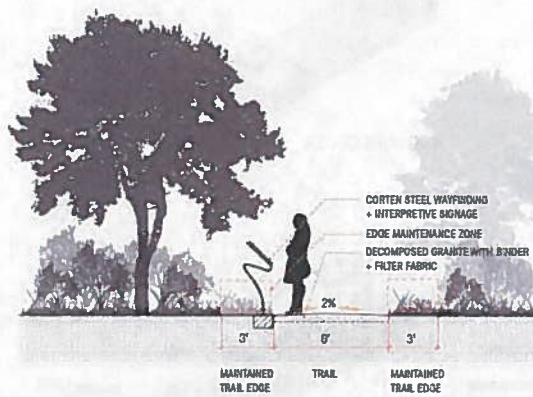
CIRCULATION

Park circulation has been planned to meet a variety of functional needs and user abilities throughout the extents of the park. Alignments follow existing topographic to minimize grading impacts, preserve highly valued vegetation, and effectively manage stormwater.

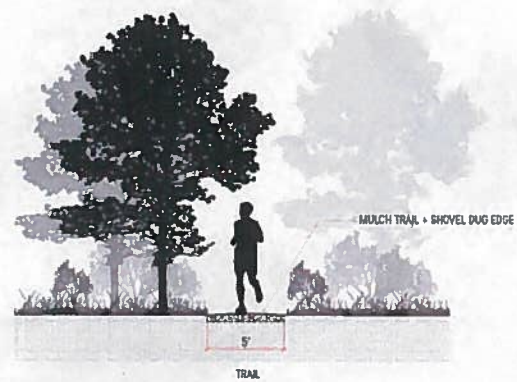
The site's primary vehicular circulation route occurs to the south of the site close to Nuckols Crossing and Vertex. The park road links more highly programmed uses from east to west. Major entries are planned to occur off Salt Springs Road and Nuckols Crossing while long term planning includes a third major entry off an improved Grelle Lane. The park road will link intermittent parking lots, afford some parallel parking opportunities, and accommodate maintenance operations for the more active areas.

A system of multi-use trails will lightly thread through the park. The primary pedestrian circulation route will be the Topographic Ribbon which moves users through a series of natural and active spaces along an east/west transect. North/south circulation will occur along a primary trail that will link the southern community space, existing Union Creek Greenbelt, and northern reaches of the site along William Cannon. Both the Topographic Ribbon and Primary Trail will be wide decomposed granite paths with concrete bands. Separate earthen horse trails will originate at existing and newly proposed equestrian facilities to the west and run parallel to the north/south primary trail allowing horse riding to extend beyond the park boundaries. Current plans accommodate an undercrossing at William Cannon to facilitate desired riding connections further downstream. A series of soft surface nature trails are planned primarily along existing trails and will afford an immersive experience within the more isolated natural areas of the park.

TOPOGRAPHIC RIBBON TRAIL, TYP. $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$ PRIMARY CIRCULATION, TYP. WITH BENCH $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$ 



SECONDARY CIRCULATION, TYP. WITH SIGNAGE 1/4" = 1'-0"



TERTIARY CIRCULATION, TYP. 1/4" = 1'-0"





ENLARGEMENTS + CHARACTER



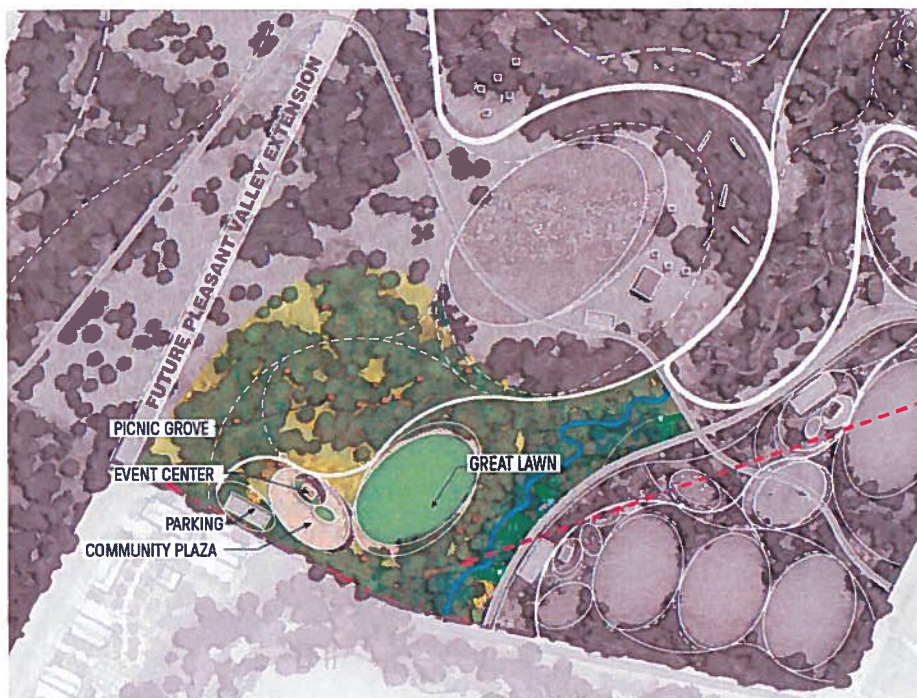
In the design of the Master Plan, certain areas developed as key programmatic nodes with unique characters. To the west portion of the site off of Bluff Springs Rd., the opportunity to enhance a well established wildflower display revealed itself as the ideal place to picnic in nature.

At the center of the park, an existing savannah in a topographic bowl bounded by both upland and riparian forest created the ideal nexus for a nature center focused on education.

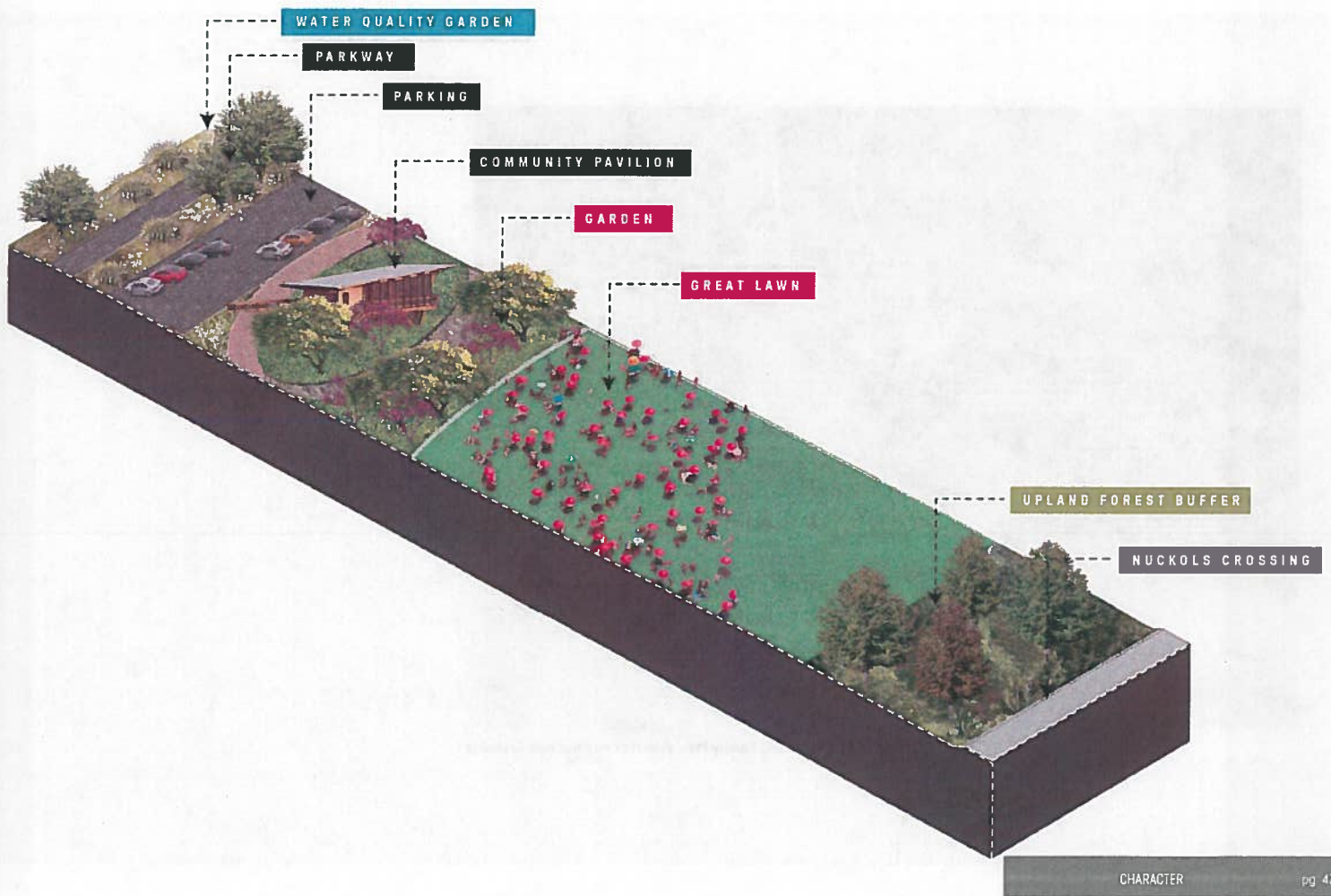
Just to the east of the nature center is another pocket protected by ridgelines overlooking a creek tributary and the ephemeral wetlands, a focus point of the site's natural heritage.

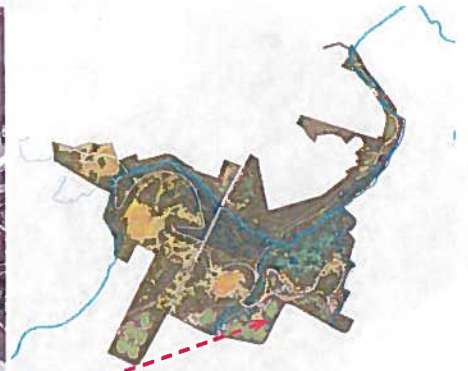
Adjacent to the natural heritage point is the heart of the park where a grand lawn is ringed by botanic gardens and a bio-swale garden. This spot is meant to be a passive and relaxing social space.

The part of the site closest to Blazer Elementary presented itself as the ideal spot for family play and open fields for sports or exercise. Part of the reason it is so ideal is that the area is relatively easy to access from existing and planned neighborhoods without disturbing more sensitive ecological communities.

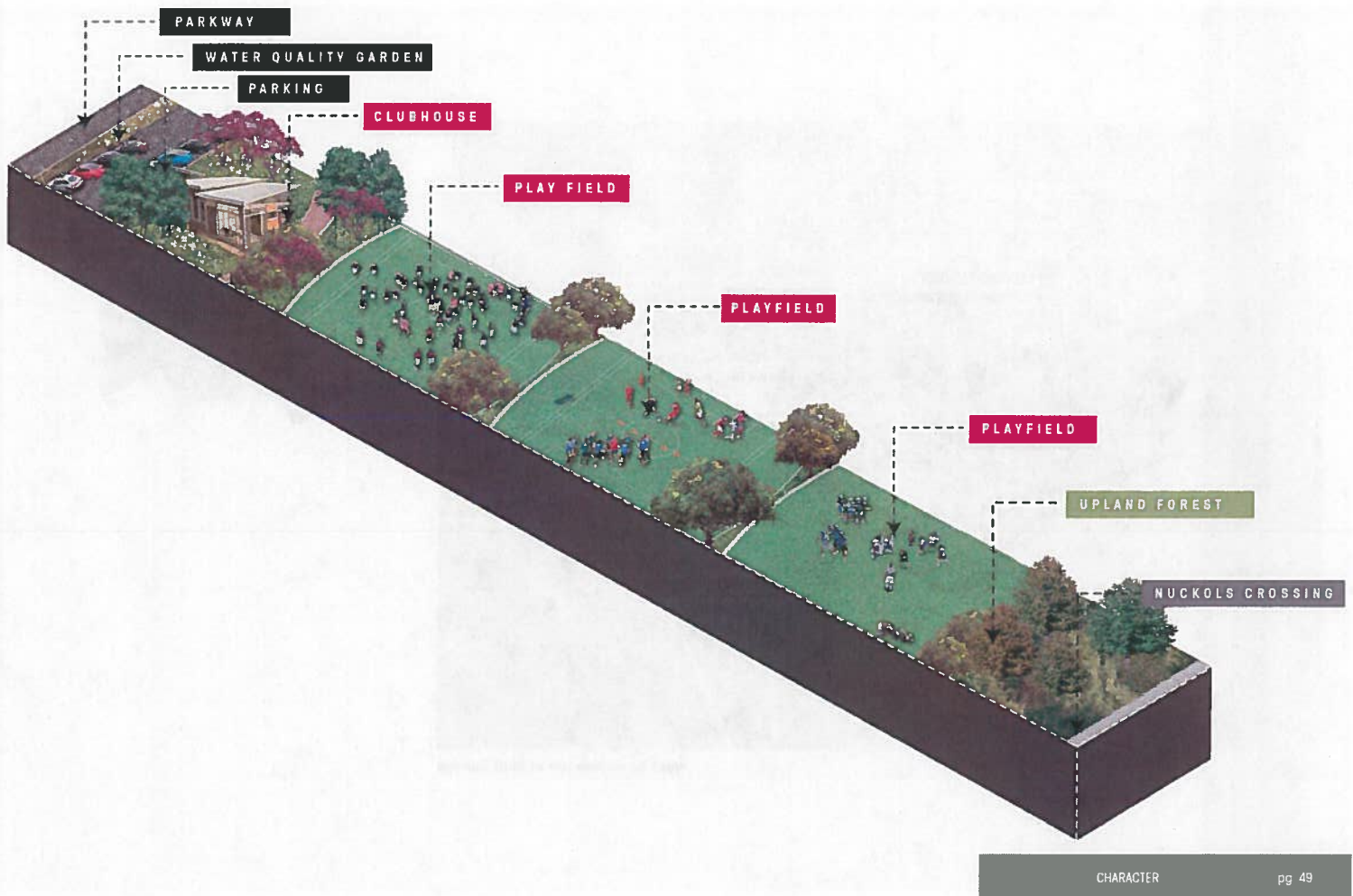


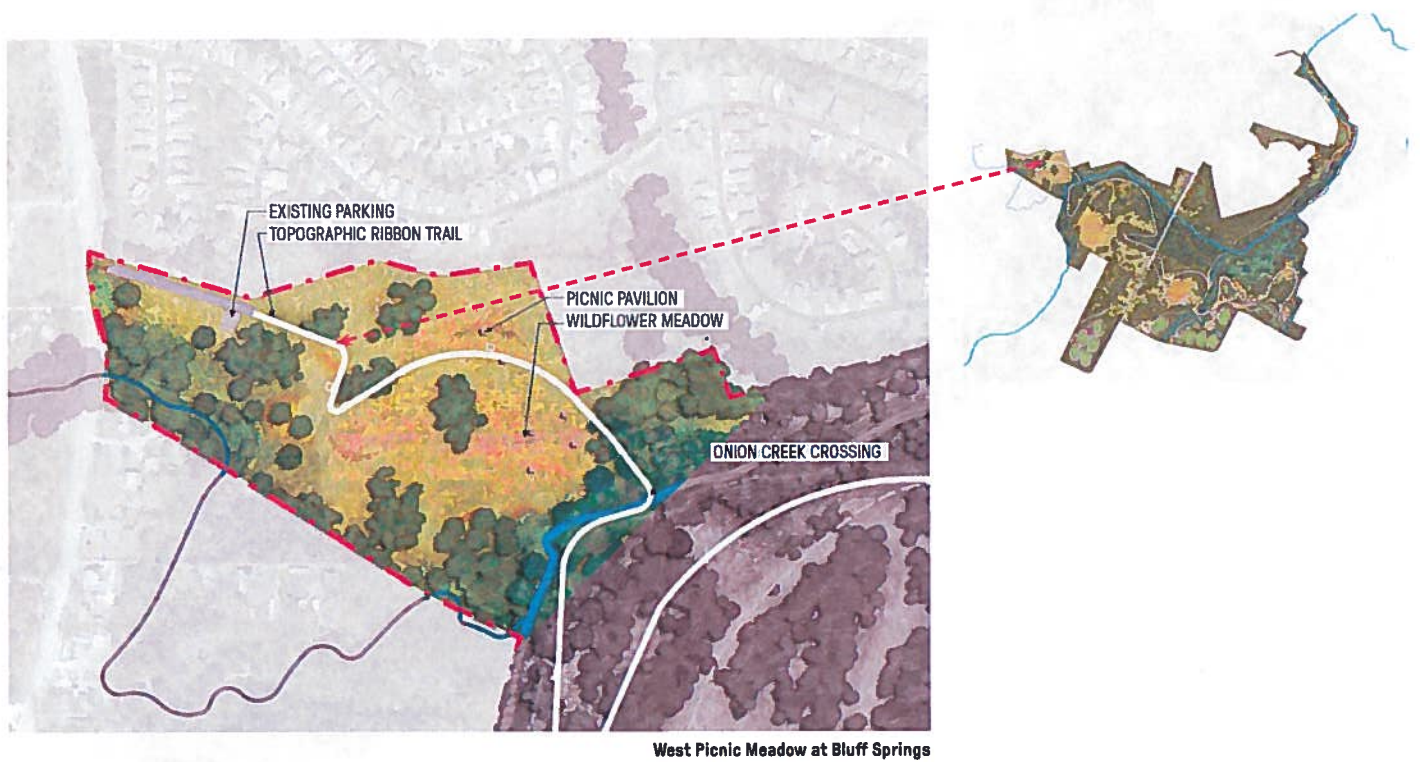
Community Area at Nuckols Crossing

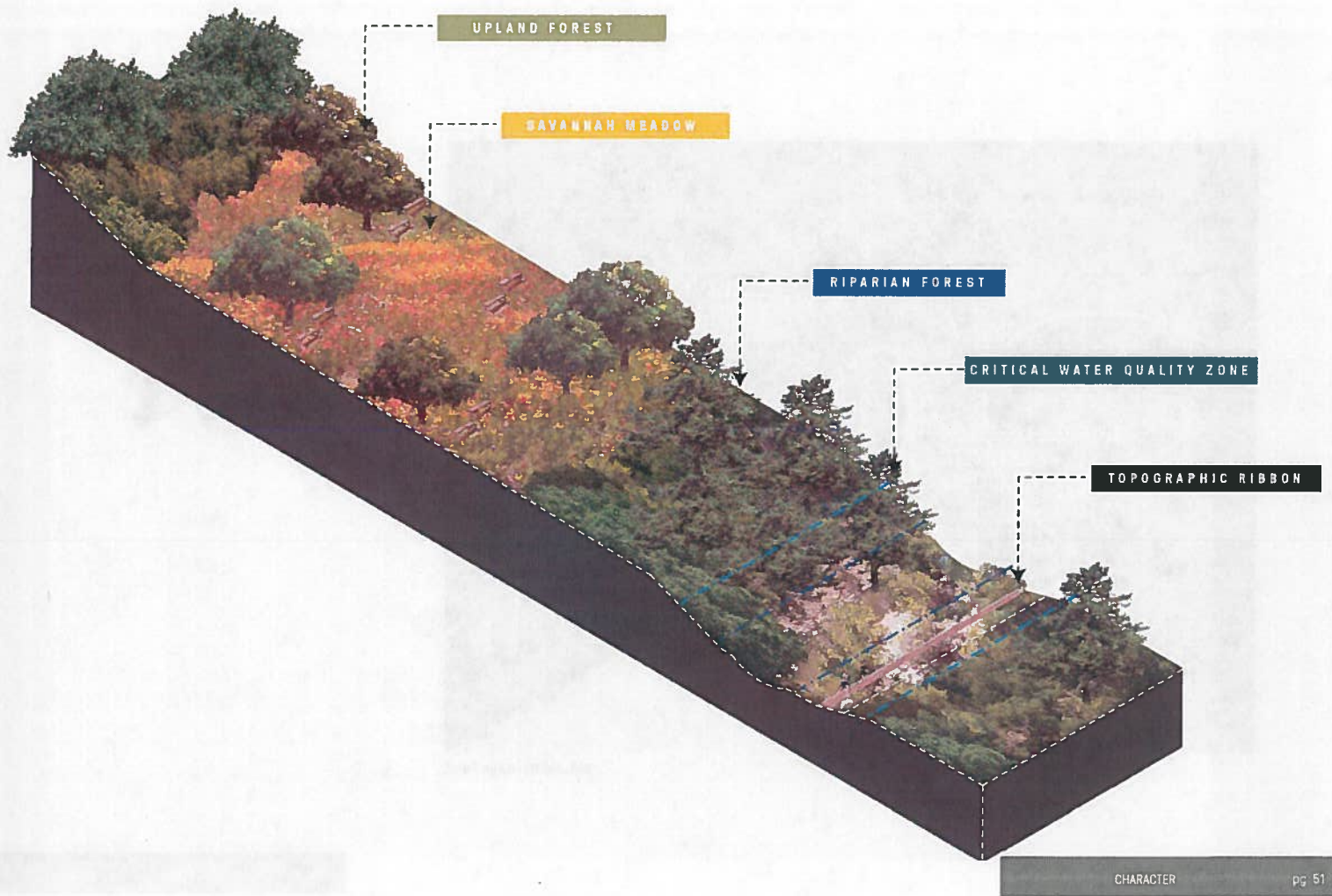




Playfields and Family Play at Vertex and Nuckols Crossing

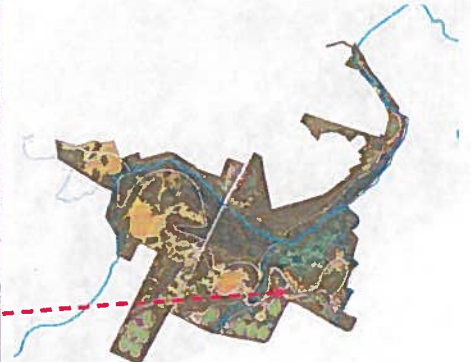


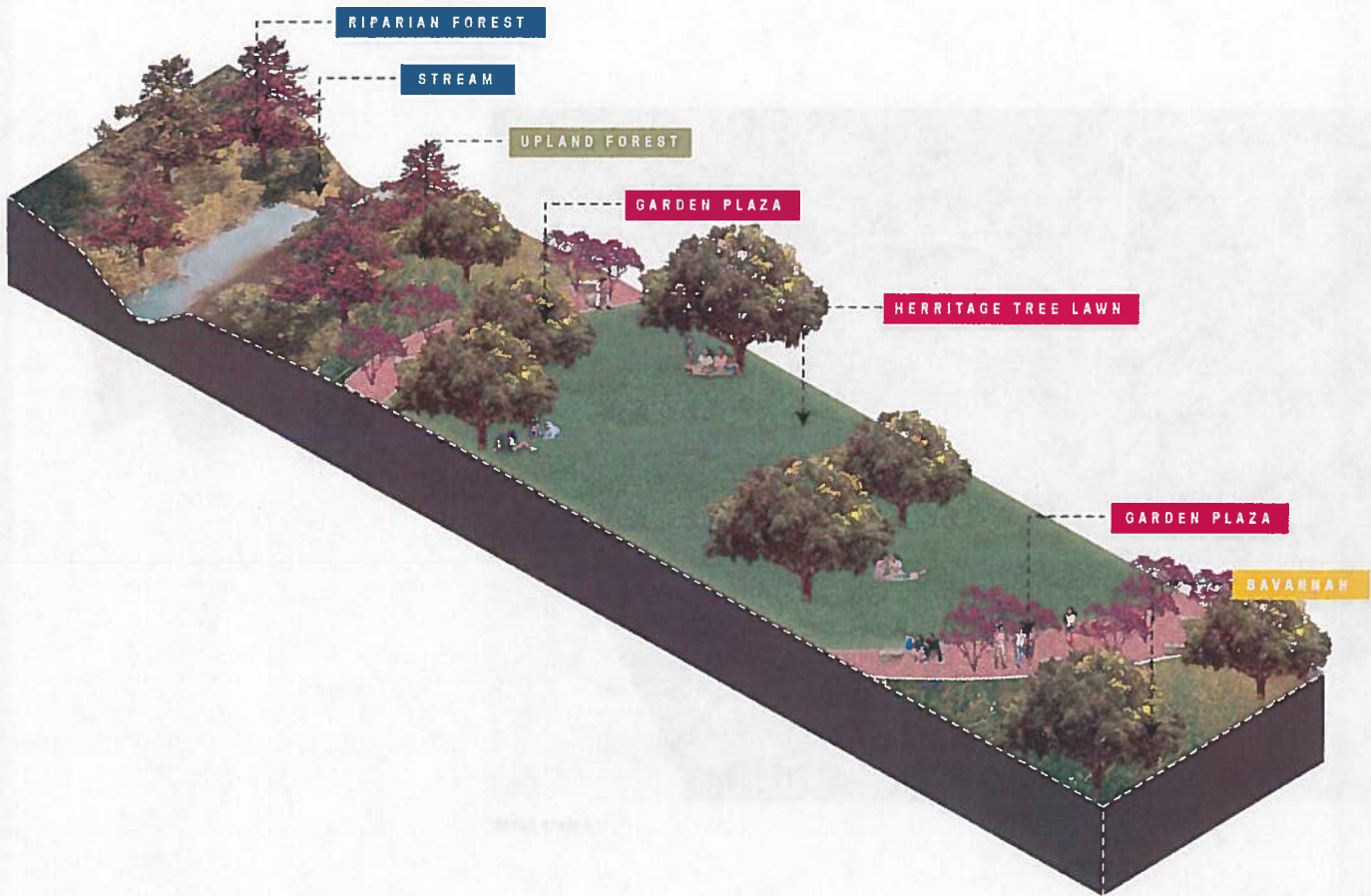


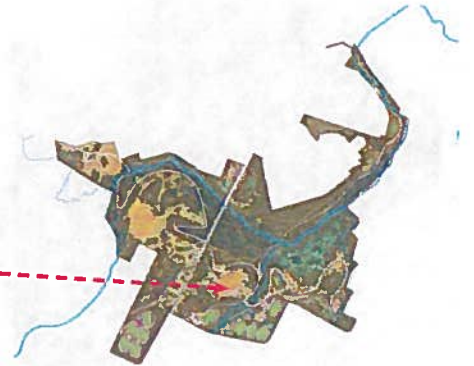
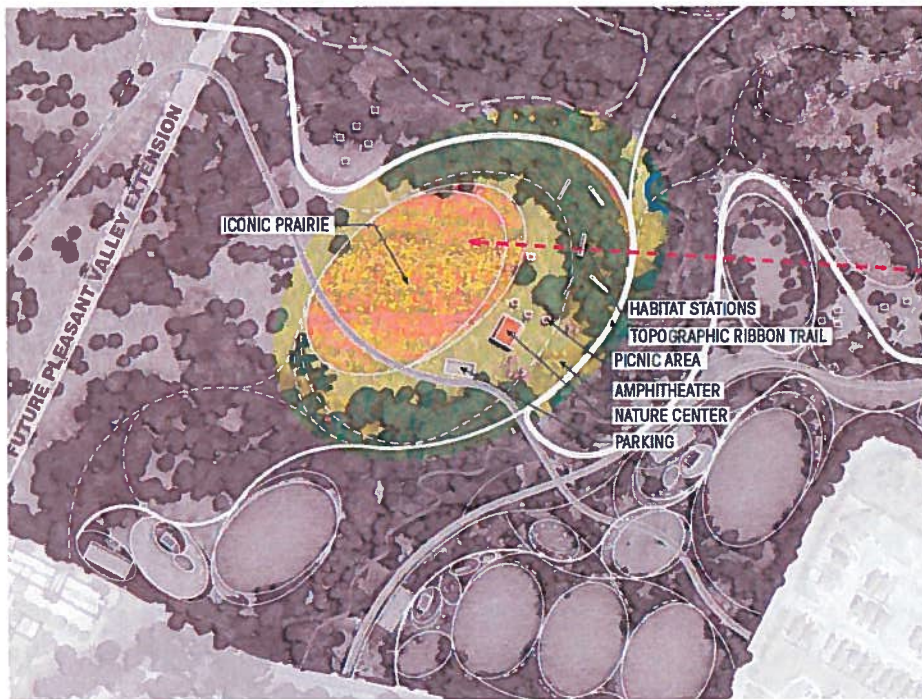




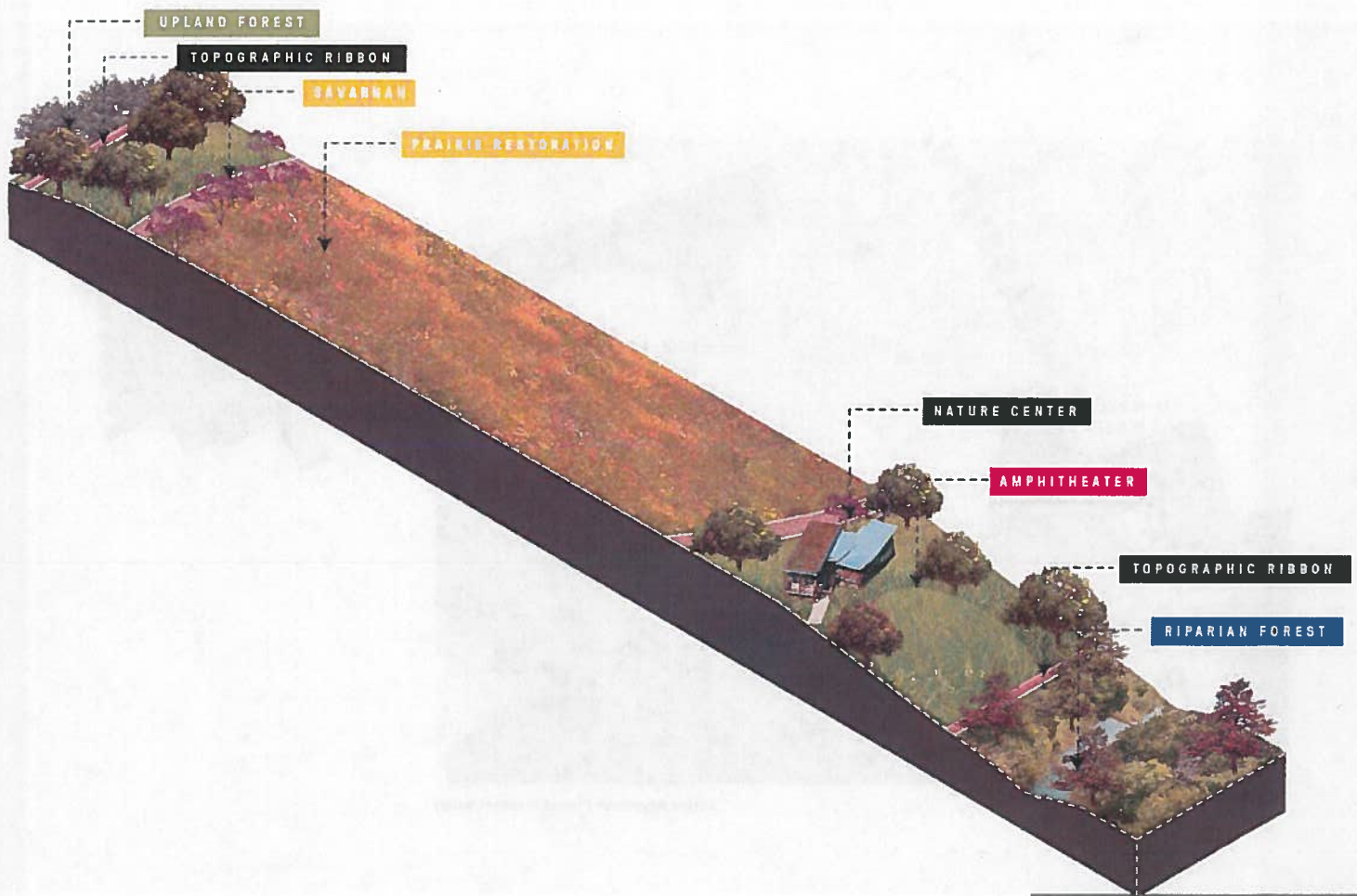
Natural Heritage Point

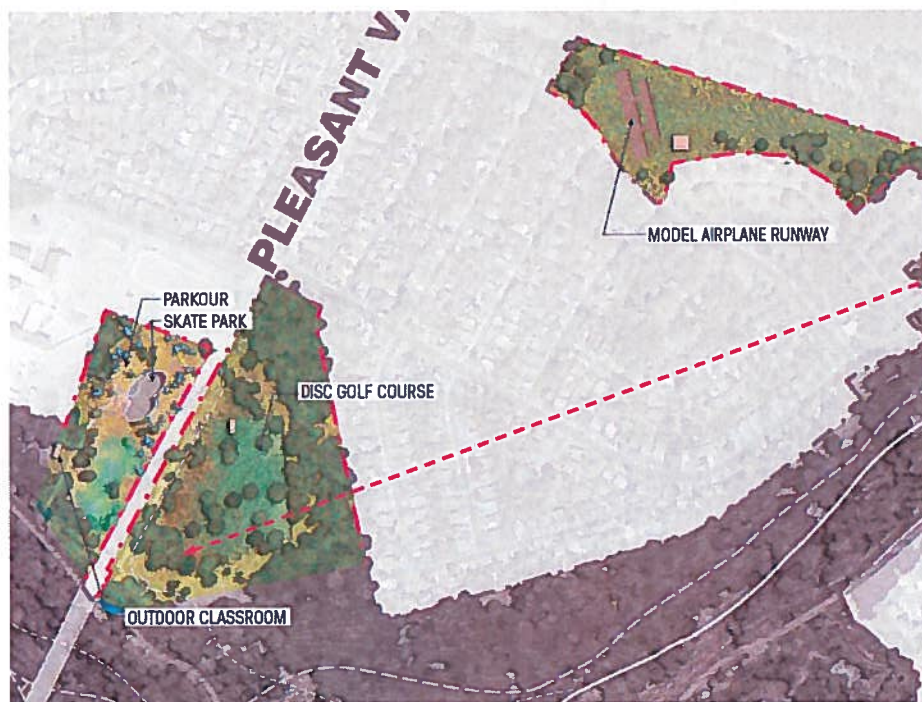




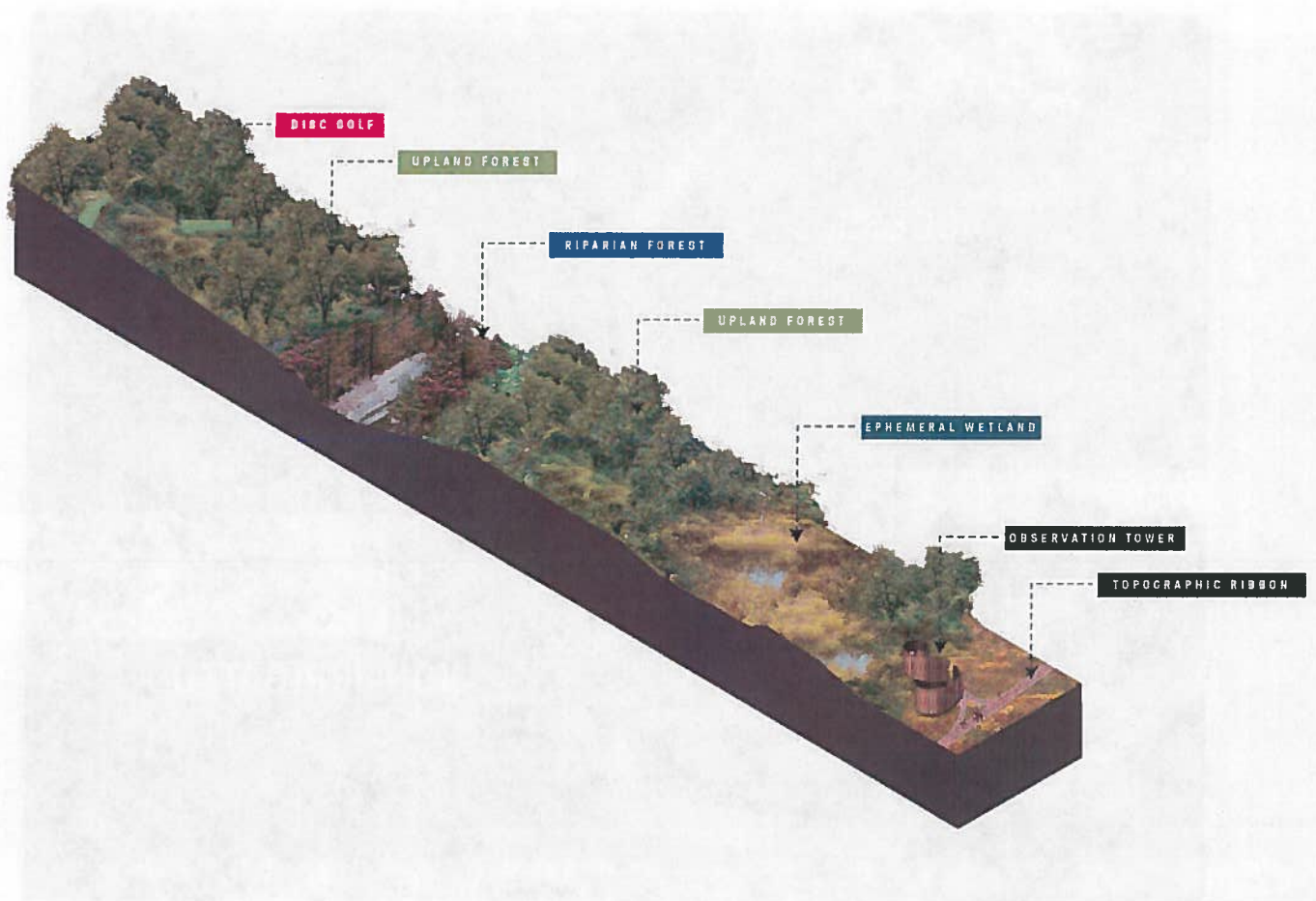


Nature Center





Active Adventure Play at Pleasant Valley







Initial Park Improvements

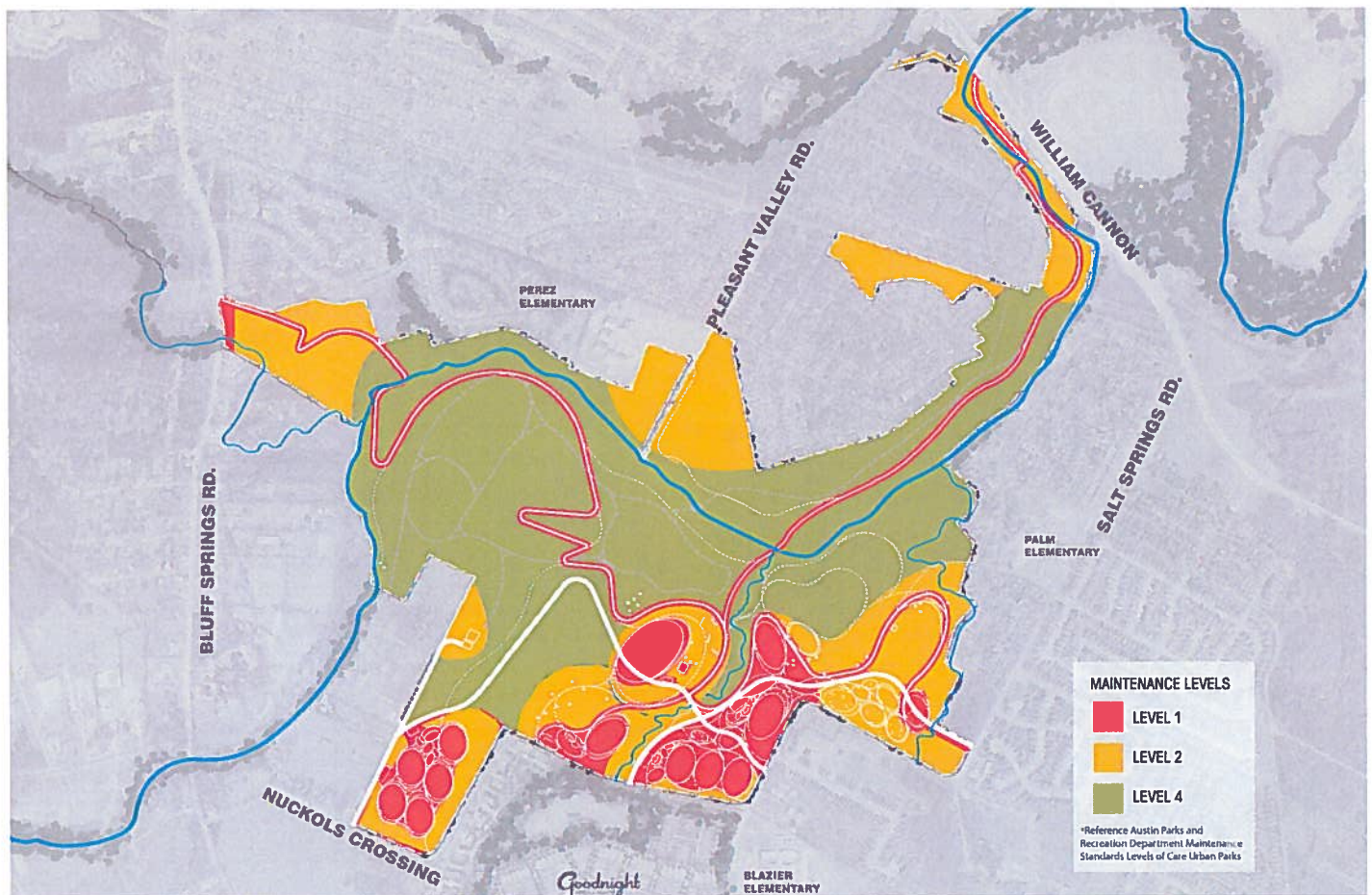
INITIAL IMPROVEMENTS

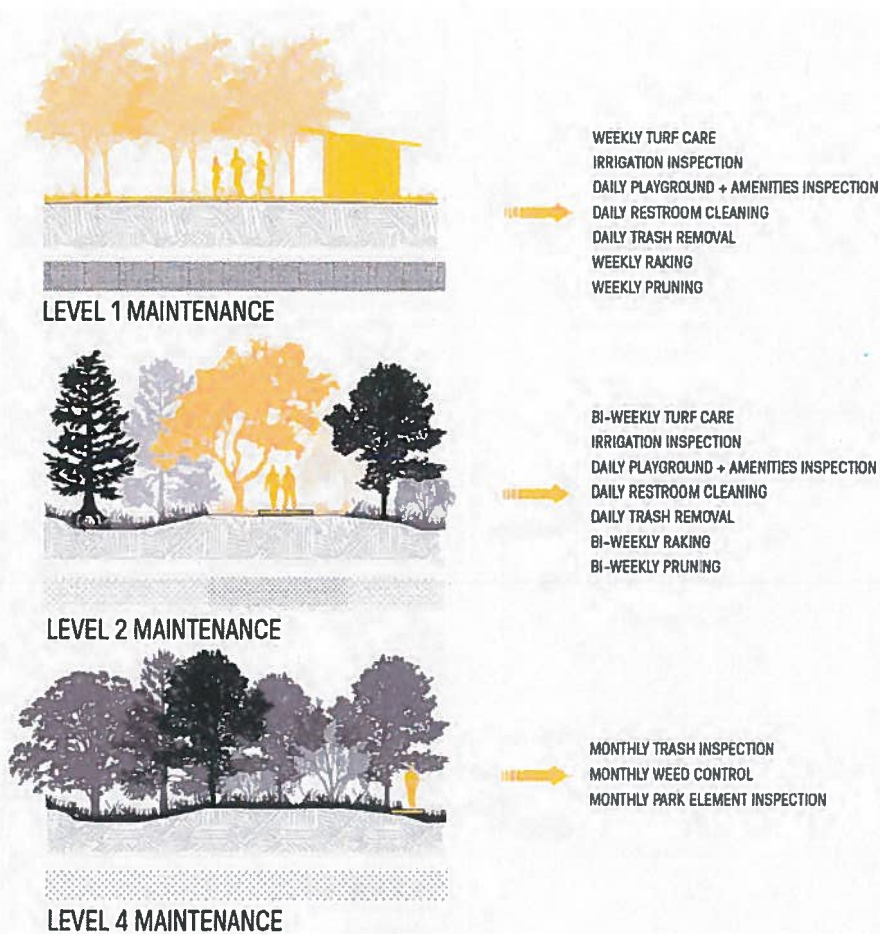
Originally purchased by the City of Austin in 2000 with 1998 Parkland Acquisition Bonds, the Union Creek Metro Park is 555-acres of parkland with 180 acres being part of the Union Creek Greenbelt. During the 83rd Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature created a Municipal Management District to provide ongoing funding for the Union Creek Metro Park District through fees charged to homeowners in the adjacent Goodnight Ranch community.

In 2014, Austin City Council approved a Consent Agreement between the City of Austin, the Union Creek Metro Park District and the Austin Goodnight Ranch L.P.

The next steps of the Union Creek Master Plan include Phase I Park Development of the engineering and permit drawings, submittal of the Phase I Site Plan, contracting and bidding, and completion of construction of Phase I by 2017 per the Consent Agreement.

The initial improvements will include 30 acres of irrigated landscape and 20 acres of un-irrigated cleared landscape as well as site access and 50 parking spaces.





MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

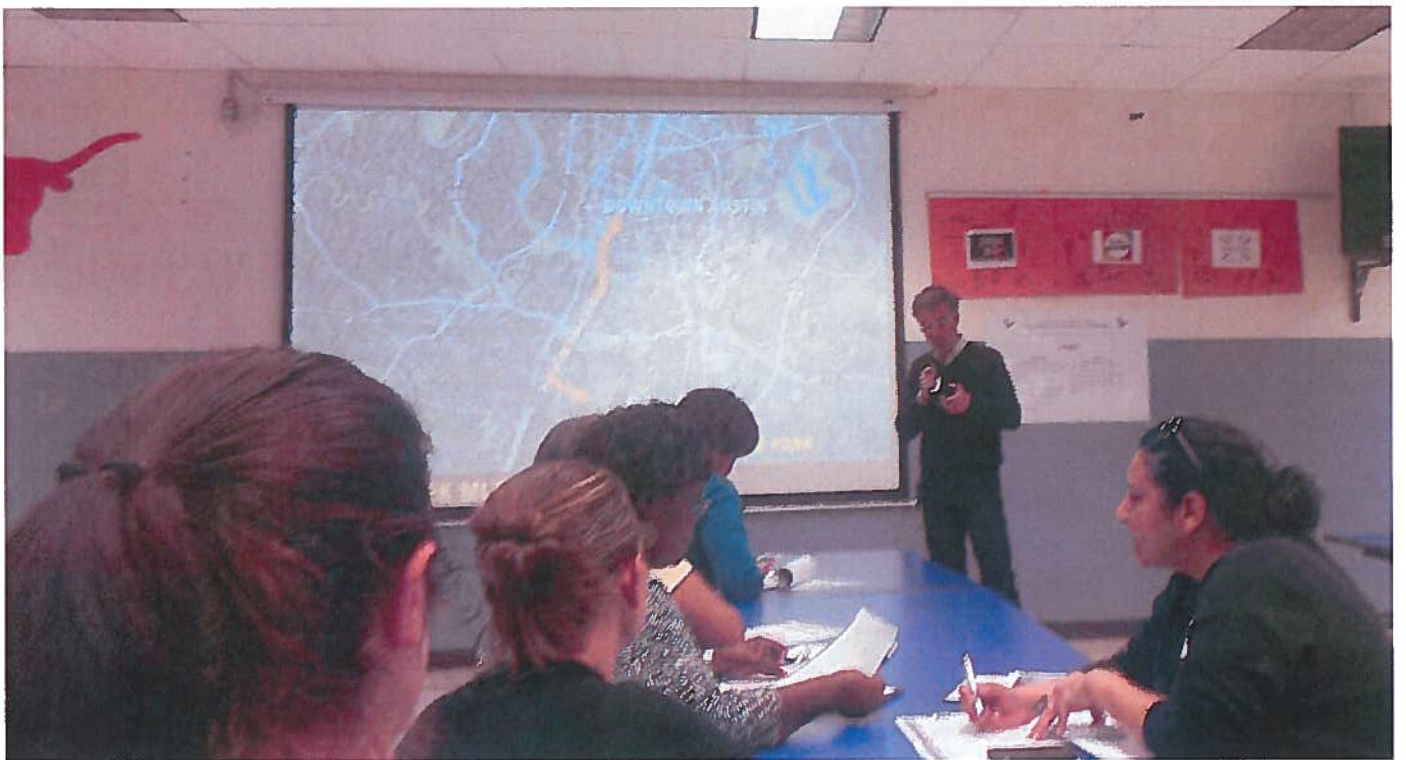
The proposed management strategies reference the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department Maintenance Standards and Levels of Care Document.

The logic behind the strategies concentrates the most intense Level 1 efforts in the areas with active and cultural programs that could potentially experience periods of high traffic.

Level 2 efforts are focused in areas not designed for large gatherings or events but still anticipated high use numbers, particularly in terms of trails and shelters.

Since a large portion of the park is devoted to nature conservation and enhancement, these areas should be maintained and managed in a matter that allows the restored ecological system to become self-regulating. Periodic maintenance in the form of pest management and invasive species control will be the most critical. Level 4 maintenance is proposed in these areas.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Group Presentation



Meeting Boards

PUBLIC MEETING #1

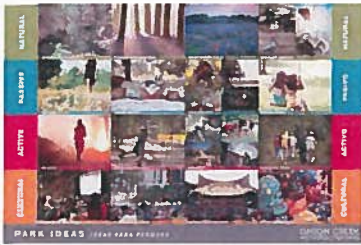
Public Meeting #1:
Visioning Workshop, Mar. 2014

The goal of this workshop was to introduce the project design team, outline the upcoming master planning process, discuss potential park opportunities and constraints, present similar park case studies, and solicit public feedback.

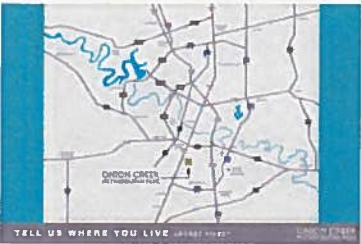
A group presentation and project display boards were used to display background information and meeting participants were provided access to paper and digital surveys that were compiled post meeting.



Group Presentation



Meeting Boards



PUBLIC MEETING #2

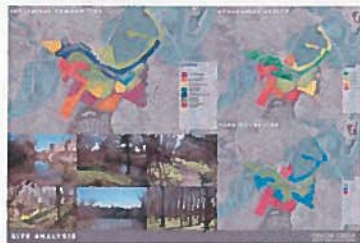
Public Meeting #2
 Opportunities and Constraints, Sept. 2014

The project team presented initial public survey feedback, discussed site analysis, showed zoning diagrams for potential park programming, and solicited public feedback.

A presentation and project display boards were used to display background information. Meeting participants were provided access to paper and digital surveys that included content from the previous survey as well as additional questions generated from previous public comments.



Break-out Groups



Meeting Boards

PUBLIC MEETING #3

Public Meeting #3
Scenarios Workshop, Dec. 2014

The project team discussed the results of the previous meeting and surveys and then engaged workshop participants in group discussions at three stations engaging directly with the principal design team.

Each station included an interactive Framework Plan serving as the basis for discussion. Community outreach assistants facilitated conversations and recorded all comments.





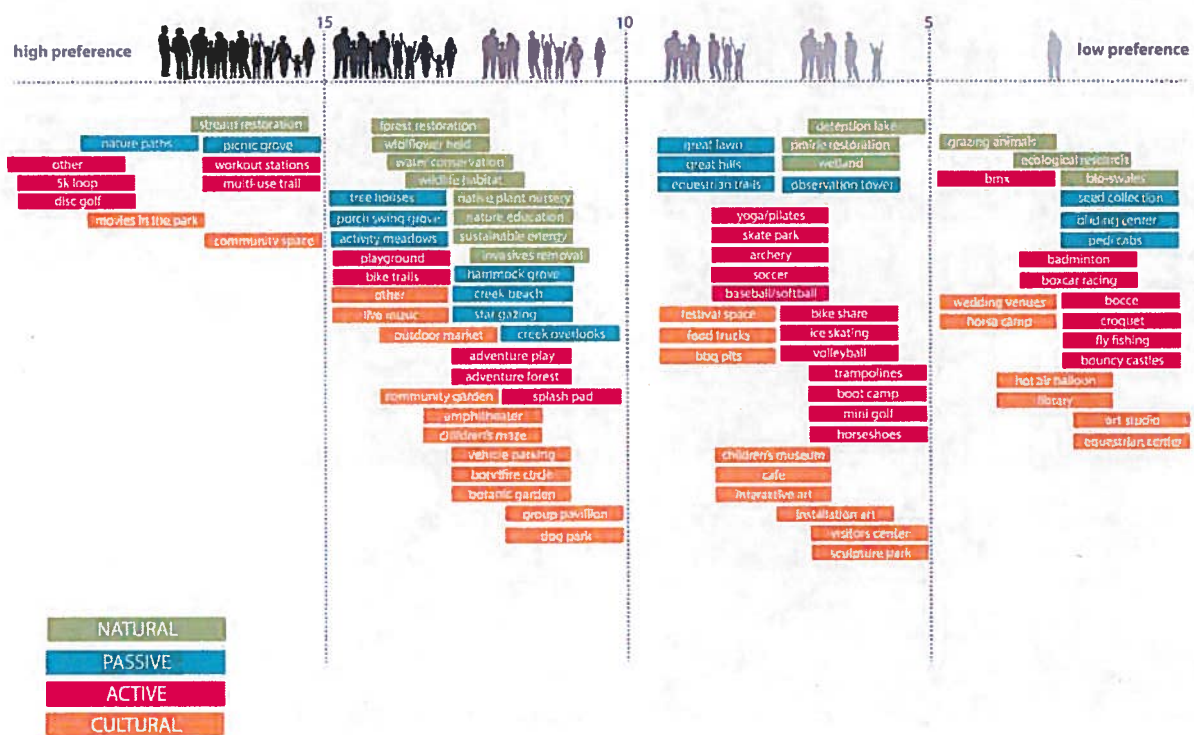
Meeting Boards

PUBLIC MEETING #4

Public Meeting #4
Final Draft Master Plan, May 2015

The project team summarized the planning process, feedback received from previous meetings, and presented plans, perspectives, and diagrams illustrating the Draft Master Plan. Comments from participants were recorded by project team members and next steps towards implementation were outlined.

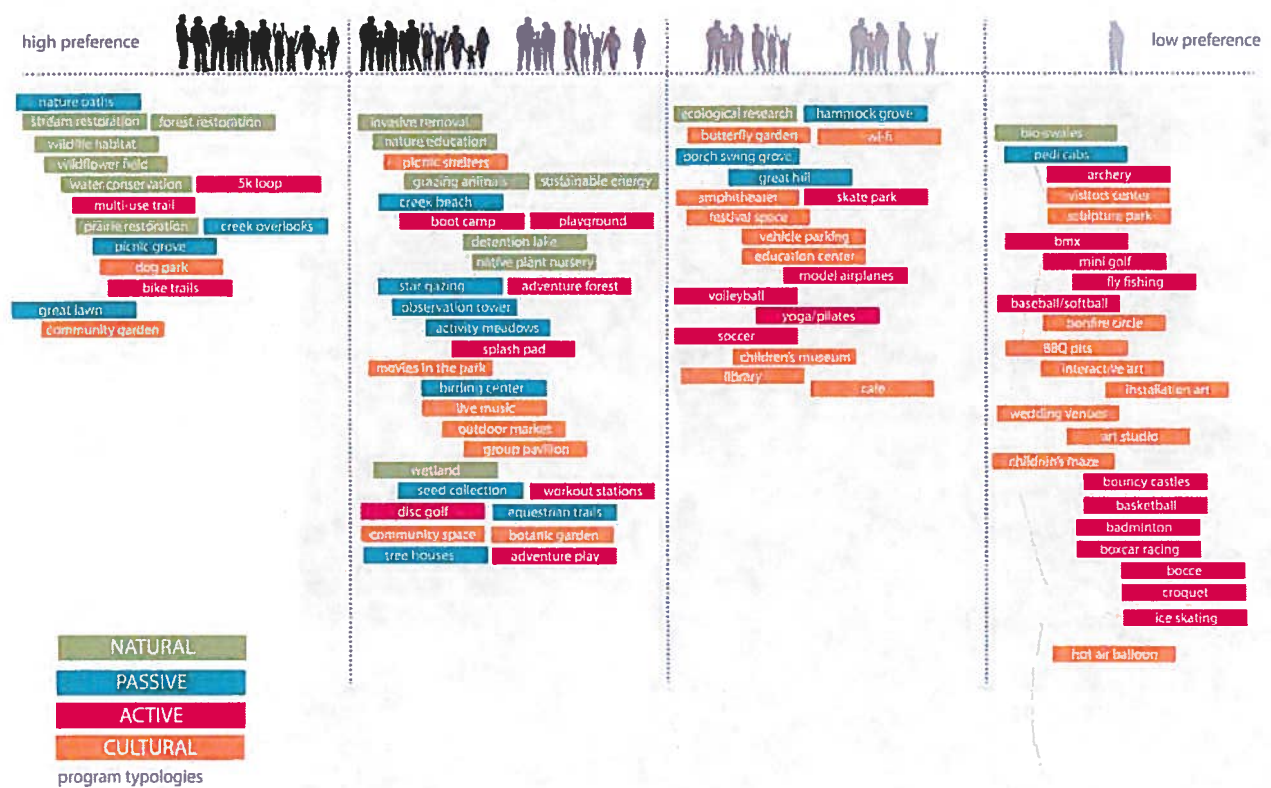
PARK IDEA PREFERENCES



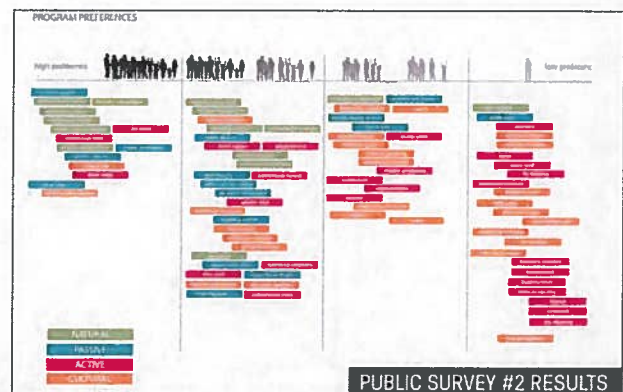
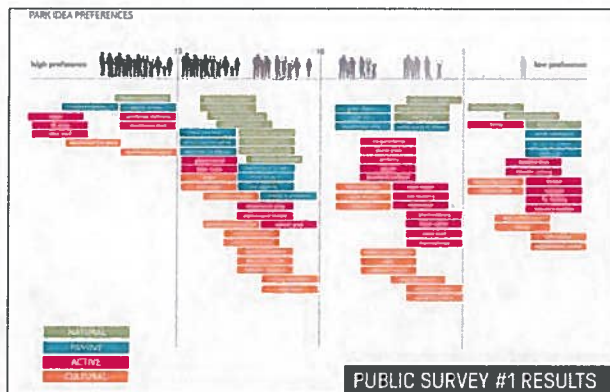


PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

These images are graphic representations of the data collected at the public meetings combined with online survey results.



Public Survey #2 Summary



WHO + WHAT + WHEN + HOW

Public Survey Reports come from comment cards filled out in person at the park site or by mail, as well as an online survey that kept the City of Austin's website after the public meeting for a period of time or more. These results were compiled and analyzed by a team, which influenced the program distribution in the draft master plan.

"Would like to see a **food garden** with low maintenance plants such as blackberries, figs, etc."

"The high preference for natural, passive and active activities in the public input. It was good to see that reflected in the plan with **developed areas near roads** and **natural areas by the creek**"

"The park should remain as **NATURAL** as possible..."



"Multi-use for **diverse population**..."

"It is well thought out and works to meet the **needs of many park** patrons. It uses land that would otherwise be vacant"

"Want a quiet place to meditate, dream and **enjoy nature** with lots of benches"



PUBLIC SURVEY #3 RESULTS

Public Survey #3 Summary